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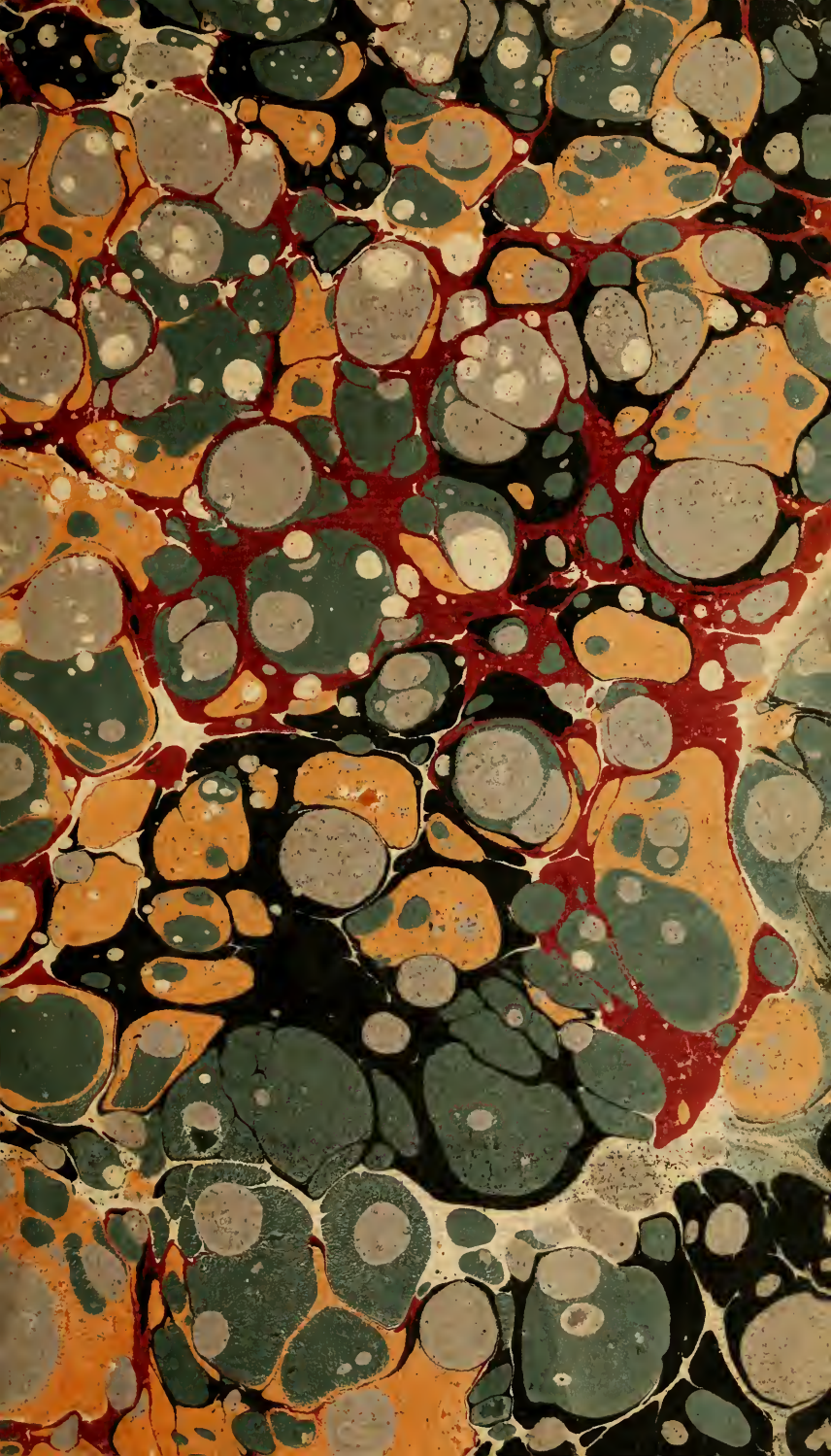
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LECTURES  
ON  
HISTORY,  
AND  
GENERAL POLICY;

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,  
AN ESSAY ON A COURSE OF LIBERAL EDUCATION  
FOR CIVIL AND ACTIVE LIFE.

By JOSEPH PRIESTLEY, LL. D. F. R. S.

AC. IMP. PETROP. R. PARIS. HOLM. TAURIN. AUREL. MED.  
PARIS. HARLEM. CANTAB. AMERIC. ET PHILAD. SOCIUS.

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— JUVAT EXHAUSTOS ITERARE LABORES,  
ET SULCATA MEIS PERCURRERE LITORA REMIS.

BUCHANANI FRANCISCANUS.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

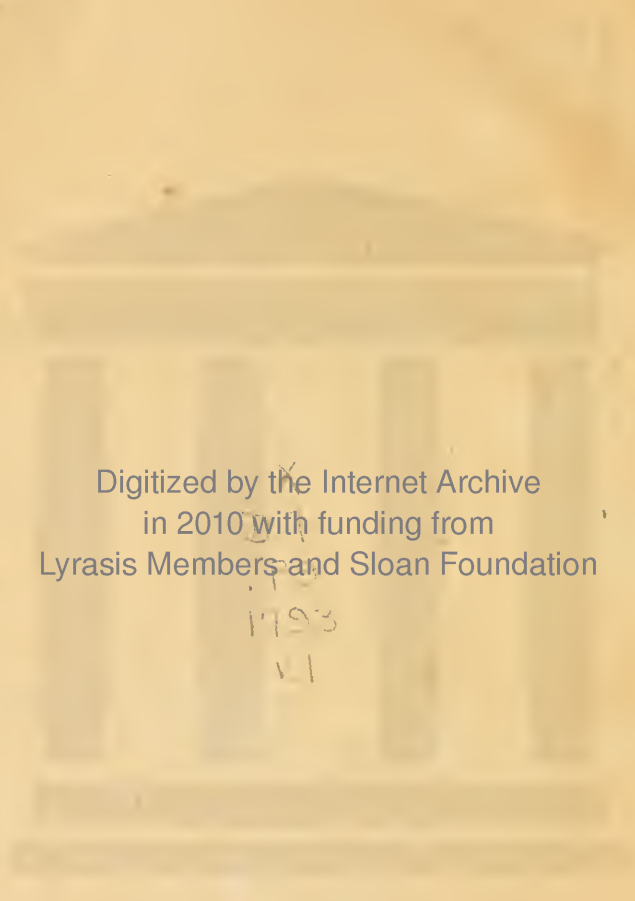
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VI



# DEDICATION.

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TO

BENJAMIN VAUGHAN, Esq.

DEAR SIR,

THESE Lectures were formerly addressed to you as a pupil; and I shall think myself happy if what you say you heard with pleasure formerly, do not disappoint you now; which is often the case with the objects of our fond admiration in younger years. Consider, however, that these Lectures were not intended for *proficients* but for *students*, unfurnished with the very rudiments of historical and political knowledge, and that you attended them at the age of sixteen.

With this allowance, it may give you pleasure (as the motto from my favourite Latin poet expresses it) *to go over the ground you have formerly trodden*. Remember, then, that you are now to read for *amusement*, and not for *instruction*; and I shall be happy if the scenes which I may bring to your recollection give you as much satisfaction as they do me. For I never experience greater, than when I find young men of ability formed to virtue, and usefulness in life, under my instructions.

My obligations to your father, to yourself, and to the whole of your large and respectable family, will always be a subject of pleasing recollection to me; and this is a circumstance that greatly heightens the satisfaction I have in subscribing myself on this occasion,

Dear SIR,

Your affectionate Friend,

BIRMINGHAM,  
Jan. 1, 1788.

J. PRIESTLEY.

## P R E F A C E.

AT the request of many of my former pupils, I now publish the heads of the *Lectures on History and general Policy*, which I composed for their use when I was tutor at Warrington, and which I promised to do when I published my *Essay on the first Principles of Government*. I prefix to them an *Essay on a Course of liberal Education for civil and active Life*, which has been long out of print, and which will no more accompany my *Miscellaneous Observations relating to Education*. It will be very evident that it has a much nearer connexion with these lectures, which were composed in pursuance of the ideas which I have there enlarged upon. The following circumstance gave birth to them both.

On my accepting the office of *Tutor in the Languages and Belles Lettres* in that academy, I found that the far greater part of the students were young gentlemen designed for civil and active life, whereas the course of study, as in all other places of liberal education, was almost intirely adapted to *the learned professions*; and it occurred to me that, beside the



lectures which they had been used to attend, other courses might be introduced, which would bring them acquainted with such branches of knowledge as would be of more immediate use to them when they should come into life. With this view I planned and composed three courses, one on *history in general*, another on *the history of England*, and a third on *the laws and constitution of England*, syllabuses of which will be seen in my former *Essay on Education*.

The publication of *Blackstone's Commentaries*, and of *Sullivan's Law Lectures*, has made it unnecessary to publish the third of these courses, and *Henry's History of England* has superseded the second, though my plans will be seen to be, in several respects, more comprehensive than theirs, especially than that of Dr. Blackstone. But no publication that I have yet seen will probably be thought to supersede the lectures contained in these volumes. For beside what relates to *history*, I endeavoured to bring into it as many articles of *miscellaneous knowledge* as I could, in order to enlarge the minds of young men, and to give them liberal views of many important subjects,

subjects, and such as could not so well be brought before them in any other course.

So far, therefore, was I from endeavouring to keep strictly to the title which I first gave these lectures, viz. *on History*, that I studied to exceed those bounds as much as, with any propriety, I possibly could; and I soon found that, under the head of *objects of attention to an historian*, or a reader of history, I could easily bring the very important subject of *general policy*, or an account of those things which principally contribute to render the great societies of mankind happy, numerous, and secure, with which young men of fortune cannot be too well acquainted. The reader must not, however, expect to find any thing more than the outline of this branch of knowledge. (For *general principles* are all that can be taught at a place of education. The *details* of things must be left to men's researches afterwards.) Through the whole I hope I have kept in mind, that the most important object of education is to form the minds of youth to virtue; and therefore I have made a point of omitting no fair opportunity of introducing such observations and reflections as appeared to me to have that

tendency, especially at the beginning and the close of the course.

I must also remind the reader, that all he is to expect from these lectures is a judicious selection, and arrangement, of the knowledge that was to be collected from books which were extant at the time when they were composed. Many of the observations, however, are, as far as I know, original; but, at this distance of time, it is not in my power to distinguish those that are so from those which I collected from other writers. I cannot in all cases even distinguish my own composition from the extracts which I made from the works of others; and not having at first any intention of publishing these Lectures, I neglected to take notes of the books that I quoted. But this is of little consequence to the reader; it being sufficient for him if the *facts* may be depended upon, and the *observations* just. It will be found, however, that I have enlarged this course since the syllabus of it was first printed, with many valuable articles, collected from works which have been published since, especially *Dr. Smith on the Wealth of Nations*, and *Stuart's Principles of Political Economy*; and my wish is, that by the illustration



tration of some general principles in such works as these, I may excite in youth a desire to become better acquainted with them.

These lectures will be found to be of very unequal lengths, and the reason of this will not always appear. But this circumstance is of little consequence, either to the reader, or to any person who may think proper to make use of them in his own lecturing. My method, as in all my other lectures, was to read the text, and illustrate it by a familiar address, questioning the pupils very particularly on the subject of the former lecture before I proceeded to a new one; and on some of the subjects I happened to have much more to say to them, and to inquire of them, than on others. Also, in going over the lectures a second time, I paid little regard to the divisions I had first made, but took in more or less matter, as I found convenient at the time; and this I would advise other lecturers to do.

The only course of lectures, composed and delivered while I was at Warrington, that I have any thoughts of publishing beside this, is one on *the Theory of Language and Universal Grammar*, which was printed for the use of the students, but not published. If this be  
done

done at all, it will be in conjunction with the additions that Dr. Kippis made to it, when he did me the honour to make it his text-book at the Academy in Hoxton. This joint work I wish to remain as a monument of our friendship, and especially of the gratitude I owe him for his kindness to me in a period in which I wanted a friend. He and Dr. Benson were some of the first whom I could truly place in that class.

The lectures on *Oratory and Criticism*, which I composed at Warrington, have been some time before the Public. In them I have made great use of Dr. Hartley's doctrine of *association of ideas*, which appears to me to supply an easy solution of almost all the difficulties attending this curious subject, and gives us solid maxims, instead of arbitrary fancy. In this extensive application of the doctrine of association to the business of criticism, I think I have some claim to merit.

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AN  
E S S A Y  
ON A COURSE OF  
LIBERAL EDUCATION  
FOR CIVIL AND ACTIVE LIFE.

FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1764.

IT seems to be a defect in our present system of public education, that a proper course of studies is not provided for gentlemen who are designed to fill the principal stations of *active life*, distinct from those which are adapted to the *learned professions*. We have hardly any medium between an education for the counting-house, consisting of writing, arithmetic, and merchants'-accounts, and a method of institution in the abstract sciences: so that we have nothing liberal, that is worth the attention of *gentlemen*, whose views neither of these two opposite plans may suit.

VOL. I.

B

Formerly,

Formerly, none but the clergy were thought to have any occasion for learning. It was natural, therefore, that the whole plan of education, from the grammar-school to the finishing at the university, should be calculated for their use. If a few other persons, who were not designed for holy orders, offered themselves for education, it could not be expected that a course of studies should be provided for them only. And, indeed, as all those persons who superintended the business of education were of the clerical order, and had themselves been taught nothing but the rhetoric, logic, and school-divinity, or civil law, which comprized the whole compass of human learning for several centuries, it could not be expected that they should entertain larger, or more liberal, views of education; and still less, that they should strike out a course of study, for the use of men who were universally thought to have no need of study; and, of whom, few were so sensible of their own wants as to desire any such advantage.

Besides, in those days, the great ends of human society seem to have been but little understood. Men of the greatest rank, for-

tune, and influence, and who took the lead in all the affairs of state, had no idea of the great objects of wise and extensive policy; and therefore could never apprehend that any fund of knowledge was requisite for the most eminent stations in the community. Few persons imagined what were the true sources of wealth, power, and happiness in a nation. Commerce was little understood, or even attended to; and so slight was the connection of the different nations of Europe, that general politics were very contracted. And thus, men's views being narrow, little previous furniture of mind was requisite to conduct them.

The consequence of all this was, that the advances which were made to a more perfect and improved state of society were very slow; and the present happier state of things was brought about, rather by an accidental concurrence of circumstances, than by any efforts of human wisdom and foresight. ( We see the hand of Divine Providence in those revolutions which have gradually given a happier turn to affairs, while men have been the passive and blind instruments of their own felicity. )

B 2

But

But the situation of things at present is vastly different from what it was two or three centuries ago. The objects of human attention are prodigiously multiplied; the connexions of states are extended; a reflection upon our present advantages, and the steps by which we have arrived to the degree of power and happiness we now enjoy, has shown us the true sources of them; and so thoroughly awakened are all the states of Europe to a sense of their true interests, that we are convinced, the same supine inattention with which affairs were formerly conducted is no longer safe; and that, without superior degrees of wisdom and vigour in political measures, every thing we have hitherto gained will infallibly be lost, and be quickly transferred to our more intelligent and vigilant neighbours. In this critical posture of affairs, more lights, and superior industry, are requisite, both to ministers of state, and to all persons who have any influence in schemes of public and national advantage; and consequently a different and a better furniture of mind is requisite to be brought into the business of life.

This is certainly a call upon us to examine the state of *education* in this country, and to consider

consider how those years are employed which men pass previous to their entering into the world: for upon this their future behaviour, and success, must, in a great measure, depend. A transition, which is not easy, can never be made with advantage; and therefore it is certainly our wisdom to contrive, that the studies of youth should tend to fit them for the business of manhood; and that the objects of their attention, and turn of thinking in younger life, should not be too remote from the destined employment of their riper years. If this be not attended to, they must necessarily be mere novices upon entering the great world, be almost unavoidably embarrassed in their conduct, and, after all the time and expence bestowed upon their education, be indebted to a series of blunders for the most useful knowledge they will ever acquire. )

In what manner soever those gentlemen who are not of any learned profession, but who, in other capacities, have rendered the most important services to their country, came by that knowledge which made them capable of it, I appeal to themselves, whether any considerable share of it was acquired till after they had finished their studies at the



university. So remote is the general course of study at places of the most liberal education among us from the business of *civil life*, that many gentlemen, who have had the most liberal education their country could afford, have looked upon the real advantage of such an education as very problematical, and have either wholly dispensed with it in their own children; or, if they have sent their sons through the usual circle of the schools, it has been chiefly through the influence of custom and fashion, or with a view to their forming connexions which might be useful to them in future life. This appears by the little solicitude they show about their sons being grounded in those sciences, in which they themselves might possibly have been considerable proficient, when they applied to them; but which, from their being foreign to the business of life in which they were afterwards engaged, they have now wholly forgotten.

Indeed, the severe and proper discipline of a grammar-school is become a common topic of ridicule; and few young gentlemen, except those who are designed for some of the learned professions, are made to submit to the  
rigours



rigours of it. And it is manifest, that when no foundation is laid in a grammatical knowledge of the learned languages (which, in a large or public school, cannot be done without very strict discipline, and a severe application on the part both of the master and scholar) youth can be but ill qualified to receive any advantage from an university education. Young gentlemen themselves so frequently hear the learning which is taught in schools and universities ridiculed, that they often make themselves easy with giving a very superficial attention to it; concluding, from the turn of conversation in the company they generally fall into, and which they expect to keep, that a few years will confound all distinction of learned and unlearned, and make it impossible to be known whether a man had improved his time at the university or not.

These evils certainly call for redress; and let a person be reckoned a projector, a visionary, or whatever any body pleases, that man is a friend of his country who observes, and endeavours to supply, any defects in the methods of educating youth. ) A well-meaning and a sensible man may be mistaken, but a

good intention, especially if it be not wholly unaccompanied with good sense, ought to be exempted from censure. What has occurred to me upon this subject I shall, without any farther apology, propose to my fellow-citizens, and fellow-tutors, hoping that it will meet with a candid reception. It is true, I can boast no long or extensive experience in the business of education, but I have not been a mere spectator in this scene; which, I hope, may exempt me from the ridicule and contempt which have almost ever fallen upon the scheme of those persons who have written only from their closets, and, without any experience, have rashly attempted to handle this subject, in which, of all others, experiments only ought to guide theory; upon which hardly any thing worth attending to can be advanced *a priori*; and where the greatest geniuses, for want of experience, have been the greatest visionaries; laying schemes the least capable of being reduced to practice, or the most absurd if they *had* been put in practice.

Let it be remembered, that the difficulty under present consideration is, how to fill up with advantage those years which immediately

ly precede a young gentleman's engaging in those higher spheres of active life in which he is destined to move. Within the departments of *active life*, I suppose to be comprehended all those stations in which a man's conduct will considerably affect the liberty and the property of his countrymen, and the riches, the strength, and the security of his country; the first and most important ranks of which are filled by gentlemen of large property, who have themselves the greatest interest in the fate of their country, and who are within the influence of an honourable ambition to appear in the character of magistrates and legislators in the state, or of standing near the helm of affairs, and guiding the secret springs of government.

The profession of Law, also, certainly comes within the above description of civil and active life, if a man hope to be any thing more than a practising attorney; the profession of arms, too, if a gentleman have any expectation of arriving at the higher ranks of military preferment; and the business of merchandize, if we look beyond the servile drudgery of the warehouse or counting-house. Divines and physicians I consider to be interested

rested in this subject, only as gentlemen and general scholars, or as persons who converse, and have influence, with gentlemen engaged in active life, without any particular view to their respective professions.

That the parents and friends of young gentlemen destined to act in any of these important spheres, may not think a liberal education unnecessary to them, and that the young gentlemen themselves may enter with spirit into the enlarged views of their friends and tutors; I would humbly propose some new articles of academical instruction, such as have a nearer and more evident connexion with the business of active life, and which may therefore bid fairer to engage the attention, and rouse the thinking powers, of young gentlemen of an active genius. The subjects I would recommend are CIVIL HISTORY, and more especially, the important objects of CIVIL POLICY; such as the theory of laws, government, manufactures, commerce, naval force, &c. with whatever may be demonstrated from history to have contributed to the flourishing state of nations, to rendering a people happy and populous at home, and formidable abroad; together with  
those

those articles of previous information without which it is impossible to understand the nature, connexions, and mutual influences of those great objects.

To give a clearer idea of the subjects I would propose to the study of youth at places of public and liberal education, I have subjoined plans of three distinct courses of lectures, which, I apprehend, may be subservient to this design, divided into such portions as, experience has taught me, may be conveniently discussed in familiar lectures of an hour each.

The first course is on the STUDY OF HISTORY in general, and in its most extensive sense. It will be seen to consist of such articles as tend to enable a young gentleman to read history with understanding, and to reap the most valuable fruits of that engaging study. I shall not go over the particulars of the course in this place: let the syllabus speak for itself. Let it only be observed, that my view was, not merely to make history intelligible to persons who may choose to read it for their amusement; but principally, to facilitate its subserviency to the highest uses to which it can be applied; to contribute to its  
forming

forming the able statesman, and the intelligent and useful citizen. It is true, that this is comprising a great deal more than the title of the course will suggest. But under the head of *objects of attention to a reader of history*, it was found convenient to discuss the principal of those subjects which every gentleman of a liberal education is expected to understand, though they do not generally fall under any division of the sciences in a course of academical education: and yet, without a competent knowledge of these subjects, no person can be qualified to serve his country except in the lowest capacities.

This course of lectures, it is also presumed, will be found to contain a comprehensive system of that kind of knowledge which is peculiarly requisite to gentlemen who intend to *travel*. For, since the great object of attention to a reader of history, and to a gentleman upon his travels, are evidently the same, it must be of equal service to them both, to have their importance, and mutual influences, pointed out to them.

It will likewise be evident to any person who inspects this syllabus, that the subject of COMMERCE has by no means been overlooked.

And



And it is hoped, that when those gentlemen, who are intended to serve themselves and their country in the respectable character of merchants, have heard the great maxims of commerce discussed in a scientific and connected manner, as they deserve, they will not easily be influenced by notions adopted in a random and hasty manner, and from superficial views of things: whereby they might, otherwise, be induced to enter into measures seemingly painful at present, but in the end prejudicial to their country, and to themselves and their posterity, as members of it.

The next course of lectures, the plan of which is briefly delineated, is upon the HISTORY OF ENGLAND, and is designed to be an exemplification of the manner of studying history recommended in the former course; in which the great uses of it are shown, and the actual progress of every important object of attention distinctly marked, from the earliest accounts of the island to the present time.

To make young gentlemen still more thoroughly acquainted with their own country, a third course of lectures (in connexion with the two others) is subjoined, viz. on its PRE-

SENT



SENT CONSTITUTION AND LAWS. But the particular uses of these two courses of lectures need not be pointed out here, as they are sufficiently explained in the introductory addresses prefixed to each of them.

That an acquaintance with the subjects of these lectures is calculated to form the statesman, the military commander, the lawyer, the merchant, and the accomplished country gentleman, cannot be disputed. The principal objection that may be made to this scheme, is the introduction of these subjects into academies, and submitting them to the examination of youth, of the age at which they are usually sent to such places of education. It will be said by some, that these subjects are too deep, and too intricate, for their tender age and weak intellects; and that, after all, it can be no more than an outline of these great branches of knowledge that can be communicated to youth.

To prevent being misunderstood, let it be observed, that I would not propose that this course of studies should be entered upon by a young gentleman till he be sixteen or seventeen years of age, or at least, and only in some particular cases, fifteen years; at which time  
of

of life, it is well known to all persons concerned in the education of youth, that their faculties have attained a considerable degree of ripeness, and that, by proper address, they are as capable of entering into any subject of speculation as they ever will be. What is there in any of the subjects mentioned above, which requires more acuteness, or comprehension, than algebra, geometry, logic, or metaphysics; to which students are generally made to apply about the same age?

And if it be only an outline of political and commercial knowledge, &c. that can be acquired in the method I propose; let it be observed, that it is nothing more than the rudiments of any science which can be taught in a place of education. The master of science is a character of which nothing more than the outline is ever drawn at an Academy, or the University. It is never finished but by assiduous and long-continued application afterwards. And supposing that only the first rudiments, the grand, plain, and leading maxims of policy, with respect to arts, arms, commerce, &c. be communicated to a young gentleman, if they be such maxims as he is really destined to pursue in life, is it not better

better that he have some knowledge of them communicated early, and at a time when it is likely to make the deepest and most lasting impression, than to be thrown into the practice without any regular theory at all? It is freely acknowledged; that the man of business is not to be finished at an academy; any more than the man of science. This character is not the child of instruction and theory only; but, on the other hand, neither is it the mere offspring of practice without instruction. And, certainly, if a knowledge of these subjects be of any use, the earlier they are attended to (after a person be capable of attending to them to any purpose) and the more regular is the method in which they are taught, the greater chance there is for their being thoroughly understood.

When subjects which have a connexion are explained in a regular system, every article is placed where the most light is reflected upon it from the neighbouring subjects. The plainest things are discussed in the first place, and are made to serve as axioms, and the foundation of those which are treated of afterwards. Without this regular method of studying the elements of any science, it seems  
impossible

impossible ever to gain a clear and comprehensive view of it. But after a regular institution, any particular part of a plan of instruction may be enlarged at any time, with ease, and without confusion. With how much more ease and distinctness would a person be able to deliver himself upon any subject of policy, or commerce, who had had every thing belonging to it explained to him in its proper connexion, than another person of equal abilities, who should only have considered the subject in a random manner, reading any treatise that might happen to fall in his way, or adopting his maxims from the company he might accidentally keep, and, consequently, liable to be imposed upon by the interested views with which men very often both write and speak. For these are subjects, on which almost every writer or speaker is to be suspected; so much has party and interest to do with every thing relating to them.

Since, however, these subjects do enter into all sensible conversation, especially with gentlemen engaged in civil life, it is a circumstance extremely favourable to the study of them, that conversation will come greatly in aid of the lectures the young gentlemen

hear upon them. It cannot fail to rouse their attention, and increase their application to their studies, when they hear the subjects of them discussed by their fathers, and the elder part of their friends and acquaintance, for whose understanding and turn of thinking they have conceived a great esteem. They will listen with greater attention to grave and judicious persons, and become much more fond of their company, when they are able to understand their conversation, and to enter occasionally into it; when they can say, that such a sentiment, or fact, was advanced in their lectures, and that one of their fellow-pupils, or themselves, made such a remark upon it. It is no wonder that many young gentlemen give but little attention to their present studies, when they find that the subjects of them are never discussed in any sensible conversation, to which they are ever admitted. If studying these subjects only serve to give the generality of young gentlemen a taste for conversing upon them, and qualify them to appear to tolerable advantage in such conversations, the variety of lights, in which they are viewed upon those occasions, cannot fail to make them more generally understood: and the



better these subjects are understood by the bulk of the nation, the more probable it is that the nation will be benefited by such knowledge.

If I were asked what branches of knowledge a young gentleman should, in my judgment, be master of, before he can study this course with advantage; I would answer, that a knowledge of the learned languages is not absolutely necessary, but is very desirable; especially such an insight into Latin as may enable a person to read the easier classics, and supersede the use of a dictionary, with respect to those more difficult English words which are derived from the Latin. The student of this course should understand French very well, he should also be a pretty good accountant, be acquainted with the more useful branches of practical mathematics; and, if possible, have some knowledge of algebra and geometry, which ought to be indispensable in every plan of liberal education.

Some will be ready to object to these studies, that a turn for speculation unfits men for business. I answer, that nothing is more true, if those speculations be foreign to their employment. It is readily acknowledged, that

a turn for poetry and the belles lettres might hurt a tradesman, that the study of natural philosophy might interfere with the practice of the law, and metaphysics and the abstract sciences with the duty of a soldier. But it can never be said that a counsellor can be unfitted for his practice by a taste for the study of the law ; or that a commander would be the worse soldier for studying books written on the art of war : nor can it be supposed that a merchant would do less business, or to worse purpose, for having acquired a fondness for such writers as have best explained the principles of trade and commerce, and for being qualified to read them with understanding and judgment.

It must be allowed, that the mechanical parts of any employment will be best performed by persons who have no knowledge, or idea, of any thing beyond the mere practice. When a man's faculties are wholly employed upon one single thing, it is more probable that he will make himself completely master of it ; and, having no farther or higher views, he will more contentedly, and more cheerfully, give his whole time to his proper object. But no man who can afford  
the



the expence of a liberal education, enters upon any business with a view to spend his whole life in the mere mechanical part of it, and in performing a task imposed on him. A man of spirit will laudably aspire to be a master in his turn ; when he must be directed by his own lights, and when he will find himself miserably bewildered, if he have acquired no more knowledge than was sufficient for him while he followed the direction of others. Besides, in the case of merchandise, if one branch fail, there is no resource but in more extensive knowledge. A man who has been used to go only in one beaten track, and who has had no idea given him of any other, for fear of his being tempted to leave it, will be wholly at a loss when it happens that that track can be no longer used ; while a person who has a general idea of the whole course of the country may be able to strike out another, and perhaps a better road than the former.

I am aware of a different kind of objection, from another quarter, which it behoves me not to overlook. The advocates for the old plan of education, and who dislike innovations in the number, or the distribution, of the sciences in which lectures are given, may object to the

admission of these studies, as in danger of attracting the attention of those students who are designed for the learned professions; and thereby interfering too much with that which has been found, by the experience of generations, to be the best for scholars, the proper subjects of which are sufficient to fill up all their time, without these supernumerary articles. I answer, that the subjects of these lectures are by no means necessary articles of a mere scholastic education; but that they are such as scholars ought to have some acquaintance with; and that without some acquaintance with them, they must, on many occasions, appear to great disadvantage in the present state of knowledge.

Time was when scholars might, with a good grace, disclaim all pretensions to any branch of knowledge but what was taught in the universities. Perhaps they would be the more revered by the vulgar on account of such ignorance, as an argument of their being more abstracted from the world. Few books were written but by critics and antiquaries, for the use of men like themselves. The literati of those days had comparatively little free intercourse but among themselves; the learned world,

world, and the common world, being much more distinct from one another than they are now. Scholars by profession read, wrote, and conversed in no language but the Roman. They would have been ashamed to have expressed themselves in bad Latin, but not in the least of being guilty of any impropriety in the use of their mother tongue, which they considered as belonging only to the vulgar.

But those times of revived antiquity have had their use, and are now no more. We are obliged to the learned labours of our forefathers for searching into all the remains of antiquity, and illustrating valuable ancient authors; but their maxims of life will not suit the world as it is at present. The politeness of the times has brought the learned and the unlearned into more familiar intercourse than they had before. They find themselves obliged to converse upon the same topics. The subjects of modern history, policy, arts, manufactures, commerce, &c. are the general topics of all sensible conversation. Every thing is said in our own tongue, little is even written in a foreign or dead language; and every British author is studious of writing with propriety in his native English.

cism, which was formerly the great business of a scholar's life, is now become the amusement of a leisure hour, and this but to a few ; so that a hundredth part of the time which was formerly given to criticism and antiquities is enough, in this age, to gain a man the character of a profound scholar. The topics of sensible conversation are likewise the favourite subjects of all the capital writings of the present age, which are read with equal avidity by gentlemen, merchants, lawyers, physicians, and divines.

Now, when the course of reading, thinking, and conversation, even among scholars, is become so very different from what it was, is it not reasonable that the plan of even scholastic education should, in some measure, vary with it ? The necessity of the thing has already, in many instances, forced a change ; and the same increasing necessity will either force a greater and more general change, or we must not be surprised to find our schools, academies, and universities deserted, as wholly unfit to qualify men to appear with advantage in the present age.

In many private schools and academies, we find several things taught now, which  
were

were never made the subjects of systematical instruction in former times; and in those of our universities, in which it is the interest of the tutors to make their lectures of real use to their pupils, and where lectures are not mere matters of form; the professors find the necessity of delivering themselves in English. And the evident propriety of the thing must necessarily make this practice more general, notwithstanding the most superstitious regard to established customs.

But let the professors conduct themselves by what maxims they please, the students will, of course, be influenced by the taste of the company they keep in the world at large, to which young gentlemen in this age have an earlier admission than they had formerly. How can it be expected that the present set of students for divinity should apply to the study of the dead languages with the assiduity of their fathers and grandfathers, when they find so many of the uses of those languages no longer subsisting? What can they think it will avail them to make the purity of the Latin style their principal study, for several years of the most improveable part of their life, when they are sensible, that they shall have



have little more occasion for it than other gentlemen, or than persons in common life, when they have left the university? And how can it be otherwise, but that their private reading and studies should sometimes be different from the course of their public instructions when the favourite authors of the public, the merits of whom they hear discussed in every company, even by their tutors themselves, write upon quite different subjects?

In such a state of things, the advantage of a regular systematical instruction in those subjects, which are treated of in books that in fact engage the attention of all the world, the learned least of all excepted, and which enter into all conversations, where it is worth a man's while to bear a part, or to make a figure, cannot be doubted. And I am of opinion, that these studies may be conducted in such a manner, as will interfere very little with a sufficiently close application to others. Students in medicine and divinity may be admitted to these studies later than those for whose real use in life they are principally intended; not till they be sufficiently grounded in the classics, have studied logic, oratory, and

and criticism, or any thing else that may be deemed useful, previous to those studies which are peculiar to their respective professions; and even then, these new studies may be made a matter of amusement, rather than an article of business.

With respect to divines, it ought moreover to be considered, that the same revolutions in the state of knowledge, which call their attention to these new studies have, in a great measure, furnished them with *time* for their application to them; by releasing them from several subjects, the study of which was formerly the great business of divines, and engrossed almost their whole time. And though new subjects have been started within the province of divinity, it does not appear to me, that they require so much time and application as was usually given to those other studies, the use of which is now superseded. I mean, principally, school-divinity, and the canon law; not to mention logic and metaphysics, which were formerly a more intricate business, and took up much more time, than they do now.

Let a person but look over the table of contents to the works of Thomas Aquinas, which



which were read, studied, or commented upon, by all divines a few centuries ago, and he will be convinced, that it must have required both more acuteness to comprehend the subjects of them, and more time to study and digest them in any tolerable manner, than it would require to become exceedingly well versed in all the branches of knowledge I would now recommend.

The canon law was not less complex than both the common and statute law of England, and every clergyman of eminence was under a necessity of understanding, not only the general principles and theory of that system, but even the minutiae of the practice. Good sense, and a free access to the scriptures, have at length (assisted, perhaps, by an aversion to abstract speculations) thrown down the whole fabric of school-divinity, and the rise of the civil above the ecclesiastical power in this realm has reduced the theory and practice of the English canon law within very narrow bounds. And as to the little that now remains in use, very few clergymen need trouble themselves about it.

It is acknowledged, that the attention of students in theology, and other learned professions,

feffions, is much engaged by mathematical and philosophical studies which have been cultivated of late years. I rejoice in so valuable an accession to human science, and would be far from shortening the time that is given to them in places of liberal education. I rather wish there were more room for those studies in such places, and better provision for teaching them. But, notwithstanding this, there is room enough for a small portion of time and attention to be given to the subjects I would here recommend; and it is not much of either that I would plead for, in the case of gentlemen intended for the learned professions.

The method in which those lectures may be taught to the most advantage, I apprehend to be the following; and experience has in some measure formed my judgment in this case.

Let the lecturer have a pretty full text before him, digested with care, containing not only a method of discoursing upon the subjects, but also all the principal *arguments* he adduces, and all the leading *facts* he makes use of to support his hypothesis. Let this text be the subject of a regular, but familiar discourse, not exceeding an hour at a time; with a class not exceeding twenty, or thirty.

Let

Let the lecturer give his pupils all encouragement to enter occasionally into the conversation, by proposing queries, or making any objections, or remarks, that may occur to them. Let all the students have an opportunity of perusing this text, if not of copying it, in the intervals between the lectures, and let near half of the time for lecturing be spent in receiving from the students a minute account of the particulars of the preceding lecture, and in explaining any difficulties they might have met with in it ; in order that no subject be quitted, till the tutor be morally certain that his pupils thoroughly understand it.

Upon every subject of importance, let the tutor make references to the principal authors who have treated of it ; and if the subject be a controverted one, let him refer to books written on both sides of the question. Of these references, let the tutor occasionally require an account, and sometimes a written abstract. Lastly, let the tutor select a proper number of the most important questions that can arise from the subject of the lectures, and let them be proposed to the students as exercises, to be treated in the form of orations, theses, or dissertations, as he shall think

think fit. Moreover, if he judge it convenient, let him appoint rewards to those who shall handle the subject in the most judicious manner.

Young gentlemen designed for the learned professions need not be put upon these exercises, or reading all the authors referred to. It may be sufficient for them to attend the lectures as they are delivered. And as I would not advise that the lectures be given with shorter intervals between them than three days, they cannot interfere much with their application to their proper studies.

I think I could assign very satisfactory reasons for each of the directions I have laid down above, but I flatter myself they will suggest themselves; if not upon the bare perusal, at least upon any attempt to reduce them to practice. I shall only take notice of an objection that may be made to one particular article in this method.

Some may object to the encouragement I would give the students to propose objections at the time of lecturing. This custom, they may say, will tend to interrupt the course of the lecture, and promote a spirit of impertinence and conceit in young persons. I answer, that  
every

every inconvenience of this kind may be obviated by the *manner* in which a tutor delivers himself in lecturing. A proper mixture of dignity and freedom (which are so far from being incompatible, that they mutually set off one another) will prevent, or repress, all impertinent and unseasonable remarks, at the same time that it will encourage those which are modest and pertinent.

But suppose a lecturer should not be able immediately to give a satisfactory answer to an objection that might be started by a sensible student. He must be conscious of his having made very ridiculous pretensions, and having given himself improper airs, if it give him any pain to tell his class, that he will reconsider a subject; or even to acknowledge himself mistaken. It depends wholly upon a tutor's general disposition, and his usual manner of address, whether he lose, or gain, ground in the esteem of his pupils by such a declaration. Every tutor ought to have considered the subjects on which he gives lectures with attention; but no man can be expected to be infallible. For my own part, I would not forego the pleasure, and advantage, which accrue, both to my pupils and to myself,  
from



from this method, together with the opportunity it gives me of improving my lectures, by means of the many useful hints which are often started in this familiar way of discoursing upon a subject, for any inconvenience I have yet found to attend it, or that I can imagine may possibly attend it.

I cannot help flattering myself, that were the studies I have here recommended generally introduced into places of liberal education, the consequence might be happy for this country in some future period. Many of the political evils, under which this, and every country in the world, labour, are not owing to any want of a love for our country, but to an ignorance of its real constitution and interests. Besides, the very circumstance of giving that attention which I would recommend to its constitution and interests, would unavoidably beget a love and affection for them; and might, perhaps, contribute more to produce, propagate, and inflame, a spirit of patriotism than any other circumstance. And certainly, if there be the most distant prospect of this valuable end being gained by an application to these studies, it cannot fail to recommend them to every true lover of

his country, in an age in which the minds of so many are blinded, and misled, by a spirit of faction; and, what is more alarming, when a taste for luxury and expence is so high, that there is reason to fear it may, in many cases, be superior to all other regards; and when, in many breasts, it already apparently threatens the utter extinction of a spirit of patriotism.

What was it that made the Greeks, the Romans in early ages, and other nations of antiquity, such obstinate patriots, that they had even no idea of any obligation superior to a regard for their country, but that the constant wars they were obliged to maintain with the neighbouring nations kept the idea of their country perpetually in view, and always opposed to that of other nations? It is the same circumstance that gives our common soldiers and seamen more of the genuine spirit of patriotism than is felt by any other order of men in the community, notwithstanding they have the least interest in it. Now the course of instruction I would introduce, would bring the idea of our country more early into the minds of British youth, and habituate them to a constant and close  
3 attention



attention to it. And why should not the practice of thinking, reading, conversing, and writing about the interest of our country, answer the same purpose with the moderns, that fighting for it did among the ancients?

It is a circumstance of particular consequence, that this enthusiastic love for our country would by this means be imbibed by persons of fortune, rank, and influence, in whom it might be effectual to the most important purposes; who might have it in their power, not only to wish well to their country, but to render it the greatest real services. Such men would not only, as is the case with private soldiers or seamen, be able to employ the force of a single arm in its defence, but might animate the hearts, and engage the hands, of thousands in its cause. Of what unspeakable advantage might be one minister of state, one military commander, or even a single member of parliament, who thoroughly understood the interests of his country, and who postponed every other interest and consideration to it!

\* This is not teaching politics to low mechanics and manufacturers, or encouraging the study of it among persons with whom it

could be of no service to their country, and often a real detriment to themselves; though we may see in those persons, how possible it is for the public passions to swallow up all the private ones, when the objects of them are kept frequently in view, and are much dwelt upon in the mind. The same zeal that is the subject of ridicule in persons of no weight or influence in the state, would be most glorious and happy for their country in a more advantageous situation.

Some may perhaps object to these studies, as giving too much encouragement to that turn for politics, which they may think is already immoderate in the lower and middle ranks of men among us. But must not political knowledge be communicated to those to whom it may be of real use, because a fondness for the study may extend beyond its proper bounds, and be caught by some persons who had better remain ignorant of it? Besides, it ought to be considered, that how ridiculous soever some may make themselves by pretensions to politics, a true friend of liberty will be cautious how he discourages a fondness for that kind of knowledge, which has ever been the favourite subject of writing  
and

and conversation in all free states. Only tyrants, and the friends of arbitrary power, have ever taken umbrage at a turn for political knowledge, and political discourses, among even the lowest of the people. Men will study, and converse about what they are interested in, especially if they have any influence; and though the ass in the fable was in no concern who was his master, since he could but carry his usual load; and though the subjects of a despotic monarch need not trouble themselves about political disputes and intrigues, which never terminate in a change of measures, but only of men; yet, in a free country, where even private persons have much at stake, every man is nearly interested in the conduct of his superiors, and cannot be an unconcerned spectator of what is transacted by them. With respect to influence, the sentiments of the lowest vulgar in England are not wholly insignificant, and a wise minister will ever pay some attention to them.

It is our wisdom, therefore, to provide that all persons who have any influence in political measures be well instructed in the great and leading principles of wise policy. This is certainly an object of the greatest importance.

Inconveniencies ever attend a general application to any kind of knowledge, and no doubt will attend this, But they are 'inconveniencies which a friend to liberty need be under no apprehensions about.

I may possibly promise myself too much, from the general introduction of the studies I have recommended in this Essay into places of liberal education ; but a little enthusiasm is always excusable in persons who propose and recommend useful innovations. I have endeavoured to represent the state of education in this view as clearly and as fully as I have been able ; and I desire my proposals for emendations to have no more weight than the fairest representation will give them, in the minds of the cool and the unbiaſſed,

## LECTURE I.

*Why History is so generally pleasing and interesting. History serves to amuse the Imagination, and interest the Passions. Advantage of History above Fiction. It improves the Understanding, and fits Men for the Business of Life. Some Advantages of History above Experience. Peculiarly useful to Princes. Facts essential to all Knowledge. Political Knowledge useful in every Station of Life. History frees the Mind from many Prejudices, and particularly national Prejudices. The Use of History to the Ladies. All Improvement in the Science of Government derived from History.*

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### THE INTRODUCTION.

THE study of History is more or less the employment of all persons of reading and education. This was, indeed, the earliest use that was made of letters. For the most ancient poems were almost entirely historical;

and verse was first cultivated in preference to prose (which seems to be the most natural vehicle of history) as the best, because the most secure method of transmitting to posterity the knowledge of past events. In all ages the writing of history has employed the ablest men of all nations; and to this day hardly any writer enjoys a greater, a more extensive, and what will probably be a more lasting reputation, than a good historian.

The infinite variety there is in the subjects of history, makes it inviting to persons of every disposition. It may be either trifling or serious. It supplies materials with equal ease, and equal copiousness, for the sallies of mirth, and the gravest disquisitions of philosophy. As every thing comes under the denomination of *history*, which informs us of any *fact* which is too remote in time, or place, to be the subject of our personal knowledge; it is calculated for the use of persons of both sexes, and of men of all ranks and of all professions in life. Because it cannot be presumed that a person of any profession, or in any situation, can, of himself, come at the knowledge of every fact which it is for his advantage to be acquainted with.

History



History is so connected with, and essential to, all kinds of knowledge, that the most superficial essay upon any subject whatever is hardly tolerable, unless some kind of historical facts be introduced, or alluded to in it. The necessity of facts to moral writers, or those who write upon the theory of human nature, I need not mention. And certainly no person can be a good divine, much less undertake any part of the controversy with unbelievers, unless he be very well acquainted with history, civil as well as ecclesiastical. Indeed, more than half of the books of scripture consist of history. And as all the prophecies of the Old and New Testament must be verified by history, none but a good historian can be a judicious commentator upon such important parts of the sacred writings.

Besides, an acquaintance with history is agreeable to us as sociable and conversable creatures; since it may be considered as a means of extending the power of conversation, and making the dead of the party equally with the living. Nay, as things are circumstanced, the dead contribute more largely to gratify our natural and eager curiosity

riosity to be informed of past and remote transactions.

In this field of history, therefore, which is open to every man of letters, and in which every man of taste and curiosity cannot fail to pass a great part of his leisure hours, it cannot but be desirable to have a guide (at least upon a person's first introduction into it) lest he should lose himself in the boundless variety it affords, and not be able to find those convenient eminences from which he will have the most easy and agreeable view of the objects it contains. In the character of this guide, Gentlemen, I now offer you my best assistance.

The course of lectures we are now entering upon is intended to facilitate the study of history, both by directing you to the easiest methods of *acquiring* and *retaining* the knowledge of it, and making the proper *use* of it when you are possessed of it.

That the observations I have collected for this purpose may be the most intelligible and useful, I shall dispose of them in the following method ; considering,

I. The general uses of history.

II. The

II. The sources of history.

III. What is necessary, or useful, to be known previous to the study of history.

IV. Directions for the more easy acquiring and retaining a knowledge of history.

V. Proper objects of attention to an historian. And under this head I shall consider the several subjects of *general policy*, or the circumstances that chiefly contribute to render civil societies secure, numerous, and happy, as being the most important of all objects of attention to readers of history.

VI. In the last place I would give you a general view of history civil and ecclesiastical, but shall content myself with referring to Holberg, or some other epitome of general history.

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## PART I.

ACCORDING to the method above laid down, I am first to consider the general *uses* of history. These may be exhibited under three heads. 1. History serves to amuse the imagination, and interest the passions in general.

2. It

2. It improves the understanding. And 3. It tends to strengthen the sentiments of virtue.

The first and lowest use of history, is that it agreeably amuses the imagination, and interests the passions. With these charms history captivates the generality of readers; and though I shall chiefly recommend it in another and an higher view, I think this is an advantage of history which is by no means inconsiderable, and by which a reader of the severest philosophy, need not be ashamed to acknowledge himself influenced. To amuse the imagination, and give play to the passions in general, is almost the only and avowed scope of all works of *fiction*, both in prose and verse; and men of great genius and abilities are not thought to have thrown away their time to no purpose upon them. Whatever *exercises*, does likewise *improve* and invigorate our faculties, and dispose them for the more free and perfect discharge of their proper functions. Admitting, therefore, that the histories of Alexander the Great, of Charles XII. of Sweden, or the conquest of Mexico, be read with no other view than the adventures of Telemachus, of Amadis de Gaul, or the conquest of Jerusalem; or that  
the

the voyages of Dampier, Sir Francis Drake, and Captain Cooke, be put upon the same footing with those of Gulliver; I would not say the time spent in reading them was wholly lost. Whatever valuable impressions are made upon the mind by fictitious adventures, the same, in kind, though perhaps, generally, not equal in degree, are made by real adventures; and *facts* with whatever view, and in whatever manner, treasured up in the mind, are ready to be applied to any farther and higher uses that they are capable of, whenever the person who is possessed of them is disposed to view them in any other light.

In this view all true history has a capital advantage over every work of fiction. Works of fiction are not, in their nature, capable, in general, of any other uses than the authors of them had in view, which must necessarily be very limited; whereas true history, being an exhibition of the conduct of divine Providence; in which every thing has, perhaps, infinite relations and uses, is an inexhaustible mine of the most valuable knowledge. Works of fiction resemble those machines which we contrive to illustrate the principles of philosophy,



sophy, such as globes, and orreries, the uses of which extend no farther than the views of human ingenuity; whereas real history resembles the experiments made by the air pump, the condensing engine, or electrical machine, which exhibit the operations of nature, and the God of nature himself, whose works are the noblest subject of contemplation to the human mind, and are the ground work and materials of the most extensive and useful theories.

But, independent of any farther use, we have many well written histories, which, I think, are calculated to give as much pure entertainment, especially to a person of a reasonable age and experience, as the generality of novels and romances. Let a person of taste, and just sentiment, read the history of the life of Cicero written by Middleton, the conquest of Mexico, or the voyage of Commodore Anson, or even such larger works as the histories of Herodotus, Thucydides, Livy, Philip de Comines, &c. and then judge. If the amazing and interesting scenes of fiction be worked up with more art, be more happily disposed to excite and interest the passions, and be more agreeably diversified with  
proper



proper episodes, the very thought that it is *fiction* (the influence of which grows with our years) makes that artful disposition, and those embellishments, necessary; whereas the mere thought that we are listening to the voice of *truth* is able to keep the attention awake through many a dry and ill digested narrative of *facts*.

The next, and higher use of history is to improve the understanding, and strengthen the judgment, and thereby fit us for entering upon life with advantage. “By studying history,” as Lord Bolingbroke well observes, “and examining all kinds of causes and effects, a man may sharpen his penetration, fix the attention of his mind, and strengthen his judgment. Thus he acquires a faculty and habit of discerning quicker, and learns how to exert that flexibility and steadiness, which are necessary to be joined in the conduct of all affairs that depend on the concurrence, or opposition, of other men.”

Judgment, as well as our other powers, must improve by exercise. Now history presents us with the same objects which we meet with in the business of life. They must consequently excite the same kind of reflections,  
and

and give the same exercise to our thoughts, and thus produce the same turn of mind. History, therefore, may be called anticipated experience. By this means we begin our acquaintance with mankind sooner, and bring into the world, and the business of it, such a cast of thought, and temper of mind, as is acquired by passing through it; which will make us appear to more advantage in it, and not such mere novices, upon our introduction into it, as we should otherwise be. As Lord Bolingbroke again observes, “He who  
“ studies history as he would philosophy,  
“ will distinguish and collect certain general  
“ principles, and rules of life and conduct,  
“ which always must be true; because they  
“ are conformable to the invariable nature  
“ of things; and by doing so he will soon  
“ form to himself a general system of ethics  
“ and politics on the surest foundations, on  
“ the trial of these principles and rules in all  
“ ages, and on the confirmation of them by  
“ universal experience.”

The impressions which this anticipated knowledge of the world makes upon us, it is certain, will not be so deep as those which are the result of our own personal acquaintance

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ance with it; and our judgment of things, and maxims of conduct, formed in this manner, will not be so firmly riveted in our minds. But then they will have the advantage of being more correct, and of being a better guide to us, than any thing we could have learned from our own random experience, upon our entering the world. The reason is, that the examples which history presents to us are generally *complete*. The whole is before us. We see men and things at their full length, as we may say; and we likewise generally see them through a medium which is less partial than that of experience. Whereas in real life every scene opens very slowly, we see therefore but a very small part of a thing at one time; and are consequently liable to be deceived into a very fallacious judgment of it; particularly considering how distorted even those imperfect views of things are by the relation of every thing to *self*, which it is impossible to keep out of sight in things in which we ourselves are concerned.

In this view, history is generally the only faithful instructor of princes, particularly absolute princes. It is so much the interest of

abler men than themselves to impose upon them, and to swell their ideas of their own importance, that, without the aid of history, it is almost impossible they should ever form any just notion of men, or things, at all. But in history princes may see their predecessors treated without flattery or ceremony; and, therefore, by the help of common sense they may see, as in a glass, in what light their own characters and conduct will appear to posterity. Nay, they may depend upon it, that some historians will rate them as much too low, as their contemporaries have rated them too high. Of what avail have been the fulsome flatteries of Velleius Paterculus to the character of Tiberius, or his favourite Sejanus; or even the refined praises of Virgil and Horace to the character of Augustus himself? Posterity at length sees their real characters, through all their artful disguises, and only thinks the worse of men for laying persons of wit and ingenuity under a necessity of acting a part so unworthy of themselves. All future kings of France may see many very free censures upon the character and conduct of their predecessor Louis XIV. in Voltaire, notwithstanding the writer cannot

not conceal his partiality for his hero and his nation.

But, indeed, to men in all stations instructions for their own conduct may be conveyed, in the clearest and most cogent manner, through the example of others. Suetonius relates that Augustus used to transcribe instructive passages of historians, and send them to those of his officers who had need of admonition.

We may easily be sensible of the importance of history to the advancement of knowledge in general, as well as of political knowledge in particular, if we consider that the most exalted understanding is nothing more than a power of drawing conclusions, and forming maxims of conduct, from known *facts* and *experiments*, of which necessary *materials of knowledge* the mind itself is wholly barren. How then can knowledge be gained without experience? And very scanty and dear bought, would be the wisdom that was the result of the experience of one man, or of one age only. How slow then must have been the progress that mankind would have made in wisdom, and improvements of all kinds, before, by some means or other, one

age could be made acquainted with the observations of their ancestors.

It was requisite, therefore, in order to the improvement of human kind, and of human conduct, and to give mankind clear and comprehensive views of their interest, together with the means of promoting it, that the experience of some ages should be collected and compared, that distant events should be brought together; and so the first rise, entire progress, and final conclusion, of schemes, transactions, and characters, should be seen, as it were, in one unbroken view, with all their connexions and relations. Without this, no adequate judgment could be formed of them, such as would enable an intelligent person to determine how far the same, or the like undertakings would bear to be repeated, or amended. Without these advantages, therefore, the improvements of human life, notwithstanding the greatest perfection and extent of our intellectual powers, would be at a stand. There might be conjecture, and enterprise, but there could be no certainty, or rational expectation of success.

Consequently, without history, the advantages of our rational nature must have been  
rated



rated very low ; and the more complete, the more exact, and comprehensive is our furniture of historical facts, the more materials of knowledge, and consequently of *power* and *happiness*, are we possessed of. For Lord Bacon has justly remarked, that “ knowledge is power ;” and certainly all the excellence of human nature, all the advantage we have above the brutes, is derived from the use of our intellectual powers. Since, with respect to the powers of body, and an instinctive capacity of defending and providing for themselves, they have greatly the advantage of us.

Political knowledge, it will be said, is useful only to politicians, and ministers of state. But besides that it is a matter of reasonable curiosity, to examine into the springs of the great wheel of government, on the just balance, and regular motions, of which our temporal security and happiness depend ; and though political affairs be almost wholly, but not entirely, out of the sphere of private persons under an *arbitrary* government ; yet in *free* governments, as it is admirably said by Lord Bolingbroke, “ the public service is not “ confined to those whom the prince appoints “ to the several posts in the administration

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“ under

“under him. Men of all degrees ought to  
“instruct themselves in those affairs wherein  
“they may be actors themselves, or judges  
“of those who act, or controllers of those  
“who judge;” and from some one or other  
of these classes no subject of Great Britain is  
wholly excluded.

It is not unworthy of our notice, when  
we consider in what respects the knowledge  
of history improves the understanding, that it  
tends to free the mind from many foolish  
prejudices, particularly an unreasonable par-  
tiality for our own country, merely as our  
own country, which makes a people truly  
ridiculous in the eyes of foreigners. It was  
a want of acquaintance with history that made  
the Chinese mandarines express their asto-  
nishment to find their country make so small  
a figure in a map of the world, which the  
Jesuits showed them. And through the same  
ignorance, the Samoedes, a people inhabiting  
the northern parts of Siberia, whom Le  
Bruyn describes as the lowest and worst pro-  
vided for, of all the human race, wondered  
that the czar of Muscovy did not choose to  
live among them.

National

National prejudices likewise produce a most unreasonable aversion to foreign nations and foreign religions, which nothing but an acquaintance with history can cure. The misfortune is, that it is too often the interest of particular persons, and parties, to promote those prejudices. The Moors of Africa were surprised to find their first christian captives in the shape of men; and our very signs do to this day bear the traces of the extravagant opinion of the size and the strength of the Saracens, which they who returned from the crusades propagated among their ignorant countrymen.

The knowledge of history operates no less favourably, and effectually, in removing the prejudices that may have been entertained in favour of ancient or modern times, by giving a just idea of the advantages and disadvantages of mankind in all ages.

Far am I, however, from imagining that the consequence of studying history will be an indifference to our own country. On the contrary, I think it one of the greatest advantages arising from the study of history, to an inhabitant of Great Britain, that he will

generally lay down his book more thoroughly satisfied with his own situation ; and will be, from rational conviction, and not from blind prejudice, a more zealous friend to the interest of his country than before.

Indeed, so apparent are the superior advantages of our constitution, and laws, if not of our manners and customs, over those of most other nations, that there are few foreigners who do not give ours the preference to their own. Montesquieu, one of the first of philosophical politicians, that is, those who have treated of laws and government with a just regard to the principles of human nature, and the situation and wants of mankind, is in raptures, and almost quits the style of philosophy, whenever he treats of our constitution. And Voltaire, who is exceedingly partial to the power and glory of France, cannot help doing the same justice to the superior excellence of our government. Indeed, as a man of a free and bold turn of thinking, you will be sensible that he could not have done otherwise, when we come to analyze the British constitution, and to show from what its excellence results ; though, at the same time,

time, I shall not fail to point out some radical and very considerable defects in it \*.

Under the head of *prejudices*, I shall just mention a pleasant, but not unimportant observation of Mr. Hume, viz. that the *fair sex* may learn in history that *love* is neither the only, nor always the most governing, principle in the hearts of men; which from the reading of novels, frequenting the theatre, and even the general turn of polite conversation, they might otherwise imagine.

But the capital advantage we derive from history under this head is, that from this source only can be derived all future improvements in the science of *government*. And if the well being of society be our object, this is, after all, the most important of all sciences. For certainly more substantial benefit results to society from the proper balance of the several powers of a state, or even from one wise law, respecting the liberties and properties of men, than could be derived from all the other sciences put together. I except,

\* This refers to a course of lectures, which I do not publish, but of which a *Syllabus* may be seen in my *Essay on Education*.

however,

however, the sciences, if they may be so called, of morality and religion.

Human nature, with the various interests and connections of men in a state of society, is so complex a subject that nothing can be safely concluded *a priori* with respect to it. Every thing that we can depend upon must be derived from *facts*. All the plans of government laid down by the wisest of the ancients, as Plato, Aristotle, and Cicero, are, without exception, defective in many capital instances; and notwithstanding the farther lights that More and Harrington might have derived from the history of many centuries after them, neither the *Utopia* of the former, nor the *Oceana* of the latter, would bear to be reduced to practice. The former is visionary even to a proverb.

This grand science is still in its infancy. Men of the greatest reflection and experience could not pretend to pronounce, with any degree of certainty, what, for instance, would be the consequence of any considerable change in our own constitution and government, or that of other nations. And do we not frequently see that our ablest ministers of state, who give the closest attention to the internal  
3 policy



policy of the kingdom, are obliged to change their measures, in consequence of being disappointed in their expectations from them. This makes it so extremely hazardous to introduce any material change into an established form of government. No human sagacity can foresee what inconvenience might arise from it.

So important is this science of government, that nothing can be more worthy of the study of those who have sufficient abilities, and who are friends of mankind; and the only foundation on which men who think, and who are not carried away by their own imaginations, will build any conclusions is *historical facts*. Hypotheses built upon arguments *a priori* are least of all tolerable. Here observation and experience are the only safe guides.

As all other sciences have made very rapid advances in the present age, the science of government bids fair to keep pace with them. Many ingenious men have of late turned their thoughts to this subject, and valuable treatises upon it have been published both in this country and abroad. But what is of much more value, we have now a vast stock of important *facts* before us, for our contemplation.

tion. The old governments of Europe are arrived to a considerable degree of maturity. We may rather say they are growing into decay; so that their several advantages and defects are become sufficiently conspicuous, and the new governments in North America, and especially those of France and Poland, are so many *new experiments*, of which political philosophers cannot fail to make the greatest use. Time has also weakened, and removed, many prejudices in favour of pretended *rights to power*, and peculiar *modes of government*; so that the only proper object of government, *the happiness of the people*, is now almost universally seen, and alone attended to.

For want of acquaintance with history, we are apt to pronounce *a priori* many things to be impossible, which in fact really exist, and are very safe. Thus the king of Siam could not be made to believe that the Venetians had no king, any more than that water could have the hardness of stone, and bear men and carriages.

I shall conclude this head with adding, that the knowledge of history contributes to enlarge the mind by the acquaintance we are thereby enabled to form with all those objects

which, in the course of these lectures, will be pointed out as worthy of peculiar attention to an historian, the knowledge of which is equally useful for speculative or practical purposes; so that philosophers and politicians may equally avail themselves of it.

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## LECTURE II.

*History tends to strengthen the Sentiments of Virtue: shown from the Manner in which virtuous Impressions are actually made upon the Mind. Advantage of the Study of History previous to a Person's being introduced into the World. Why the Representations of Historians are almost universally favourable to Virtue. What kind of Scenes History actually exhibits which are favourable to Virtue. A View of the Sentiments and Conduct of great Men inspires the Mind with a Taste for solid Glory and true Greatness. History enables us to form just Ideas both of the Strength and Weakness of human Nature. Instances of both, with Reflections.*

THE third use of history is, that it tends to strengthen the sentiments of virtue. That  
this

this is the tendency of an acquaintance with history will be evident, if we consider in what manner virtuous impressions are actually made upon the mind. How do we acquire a love for virtue; but by frequently viewing it in those points of light in which it appears *desirable* to us, and in a situation of mind in which no bias is laid upon us in favour of vice?

It cannot be denied by any who maintain that virtue is its own sufficient reward in this life, that even a just and well-conducted knowledge of the world would have this happy effect. It is only a partial acquaintance with it, seeing things in an unfair point of light, and with minds prejudiced by prospects of pleasure, interest, or false notions of honour, that prevents that happy consequence from taking place universally: Now, to study history is to come at the knowledge of the world in the most favourable circumstances. Historians are the best guides and tutors we can take with us in our travels. They show us *the whole* of transactions and characters, before a partial view of them can have had time to make unfavourable impressions on our minds; and all the reflections

reflections they make upon men and things are uniformly dictated by a sense of virtue and honour. Even Machiavel himself, though his very name conveys the idea of baseness and villany as a politician, discovers, as Mr. Hume observes, true sentiments of virtue in his history of Florence.

In such company, and in the hands of such able and faithful conductors, what reason have we to be alarmed to see our friends introduced to a knowledge of mankind? There is certainly a great difference between a person's being admitted to see the figure which Alexander the Great, or Charles XII. made at the head of their conquests; to view the court of Dionysius, of Nero; or of Lewis XIV. in all their splendour, and seeing the figure their whole lives make in the annals of history. In the former situation the incautious mind of a young man might be in danger of being captivated with the charms of ambition, voluptuousness, or magnificence; but looking upon the same objects from the more advantageous situation in which history places us, we must certainly be equally struck with their vanity and folly, and conceive a disgust and aversion to them. It is with the knowledge



ledge of the world as Pope says it is with learning:

Here smaller draughts intoxicate the brain,  
But drinking largely sobers us again.

The only reason why a young person cannot be safely trusted with viewing the vices, as well as the virtues, that are in the world, is that, if left to himself in real life, vice may be so circumstanced, as to be but too inviting to his unexperienced mind. But in history vice never appears tempting. Indeed, whatever be the disposition of historians themselves, if they give a faithful view of things, as they have really come to pass, they cannot help giving a representation favourable to virtue. So consistent is the order of Divine Providence, that, if the scheme be fairly and completely represented, we may depend upon it that nothing will be exhibited from which it may be justly concluded, that vice is eligible upon the whole. Contrary, therefore, to what may be apprehended from a promiscuous acquaintance with the world, through the glass of history, vices may be viewed as safely as virtues. Nay, they both equally teach wisdom and good morals. It is even impossible



impossible to say which of them inculcate the important lesson with more force. The excesses of a Nero, and the goodness of a Marcus Aurelius, have the same good effect in history.

Thus it appears, by arguing as it were *a priori*, from the lights in which characters and events are seen in history, that it *must* have an effect that is favourable to virtue. I shall now demonstrate the same thing more particularly, by showing what scenes history actually exhibits that have this happy tendency.

In the first place, history, by displaying the sentiments and conduct of truly great men, and those of a contrary character, tends to inspire us with a taste for solid glory and real greatness; and convinces us that it does not consist in what the generality of mankind are so eager in the pursuit of.

We can never imagine, if we derive our instruction from history, that true greatness consists in *riches*; when we see that some of the most distinguished characters in the annals of mankind were formed, and lived, in poverty; men who showed their contempt of riches by refusing to improve the opportuni-

ties they had of amassing wealth. Not to mention Cincinnatus, Fabricius, and other Romans in the early ages of that city, honoured for their poverty, but who had no opportunity of acquiring what we should call riches; Scipio Æmilianus, who might have engrossed almost all the wealth of Carthage, never made a single acquisition in all his life. The great Philopœmen generally went in a very plain dress, and without any servant or attendants. The emperors, Nerva, Trajan, Antoninus, and Aurelius, sold their palaces, their gold and silver plate, their valuable furniture, and all the superfluities they could dispense with, which their predecessors had heaped up, and banished all expences and delicacies from their tables with the greatest severity.

These princes, together with Vespasian, Pertinax, Alexander Severus, Claudius the second, and Tacitus, who were raised to the empire by their merit, and whom all ages have admired as the greatest and the best of princes, were ever fond of the greatest plainness in their apparel, furniture, and outward appearance. The ruins of Adrian's country seat are still to be seen, and it does not ap-

pear to have exceeded the bigness of one of our common houses. Even Augustus himself, during a reign of near fifty years, never changed his apartment, or furniture. We see the same just turn of thinking in the famous Cornelia, daughter of the great Scipio. When a lady of her acquaintance desired very importunately to see her toilet, she deferred satisfying her curiosity till her children, who were the famous Gracchi, came from school, and then only said *En! hæc ornamenta mea sunt. These are my ornaments.*

When temperance, frugality, and a just sense of greatness are graced with such names as these I have mentioned, shall we be in any danger of abandoning ourselves to excess in imitation of the infamous Nero, whose golden palace, Herodian says, was as large as all the rest of the city of Rome, and whose extravagance in other respects was in proportion to it; of Caligula, of the beastly Commodus, or the mad Heliogabalus? Do we admire Lucullus the more for the idea that Cicero gives us of his expensive table? Or can we think Marc Antony to be commended for having a succession of grand entertainments

always ready, that whenever he was disposed to eat he might never wait half an hour?

Can we think that *honours* and *preferment* constitute true greatness, when we see in history that the most worthy men have generally declined them? Tacitus and Probus, who did so much honour to their stations, were both advanced to the empire against their inclinations: and in how much fairer a point of light do their characters stand than that of those sons of ambition, who waded through seas of blood to come at it?

The extravagancies of Alexander the Great in killing his best friends, the cruelties of the Spaniards in America, the ruin of Sweden by Charles XII. are certainly more proper to shew the folly and madness of unbounded ambition, than their victories are to dazzle our minds with their glare. How we regret that unhappy turn of mind when we consider what valuable members of society their abilities would have rendered such men as Julius Cæsar, and Pompey, had they jointly employed them to raise the glory of their country; and that the expences of Lewis XIV. in preparations for destruction, were more than  
sufficient



killing wild beasts, completely expose the affectation of excelling in what is out of our proper sphere. The same maxim is conveyed by Philip, when he asked his son Alexander, if he was not ashamed to play on a musical instrument so well as he did.

In how different a light do those men appear in history who are greedy to engross all praise to themselves, and those who contribute heartily to the reputation of others? An instance of the former we see in Claudius, who made an idle expedition to finish the conquest of Britain; of the latter in M. Aurelius, who denied himself the pleasure of attending his sister Lucilla (whom he had married to L. Verus) into the East, lest his presence should give a check to the growing reputation of his son-in-law, and seem to draw upon himself the honour of putting an end to an important war, to the other's prejudice. And history does the most ample recompence to those who have generously sacrificed their own reputation to the public good. Thus Fabius Maximus, to his immortal honour, notwithstanding the provoking insults he received from Minucius, rescued him from the hands of Hannibal, setting aside  
his



his *resentment*, and consulting only his zeal for the interest of his country.

We conceive more clearly what true greatness of mind is, at the same time that our hearts are more filled with admiration of it, and burn with a stronger passion for it, by a simple narration of some incidents in history, than by the most elaborate and philosophically exact description of it. What can give us a clearer idea of the noble sentiments of strict honour and integrity than marshal Turenne's refusing a sum of money, which was offered him if he would not march his army through a certain territory, because he had not intended to march that way. Does not every person's heart strongly feel the sentiments of benevolence, when he hears the good Titus exclaiming that he had *lost a day*, because he had done no person a good office in it? If a person be capable of forming any idea of greatness of mind in forgiving injuries, he will do it from hearing the following reply that Lewis XII. made to a courtier, who pressed him to punish a person who had offended him before he came to the throne: "It belongs  
" not to the king of France to revenge the  
" injuries offered to the duke of Orleans."

Or, lastly, what can give so just an idea of the true spirit and magnanimity of a soldier, as the reply that viscount Dorée made to Charles IX. of France, when he received an order from him to massacre the Hugonots, "I desire your majesty would employ me in what is *possible*."

The last example leads me to a second observation, which is, that history enables us to form just ideas of the dignity and the weakness of human nature, both of which are extremely useful to us in life. The one inspires us with the noble ambition of rising above the level of our species; and the other view, without destroying, tempers that ambition with no more than a due degree of humility and diffidence; which in fact equally contributes to the same end. What I mean will be more clearly understood by a few examples.

How can we conceive a more just, or a more exalted idea of a sense of true honour and heroism, than by reading such stories as that of the behaviour of the earl of Peterborough at the famous siege of Barcelona? While he was settling the terms of capitulation with the Spanish commander, news  
was

was brought that, contrary to the suspension of arms agreed upon between them, a party of the allied troops had broke into the town. The earl told the Spanish general, that if he would give him leave to enter the town with his English troops, he would drive out his allies, and then return to finish the capitulation, which he actually performed.

I shall say nothing of the fabulous story of Curtius, who is said to have leaped into a gulph, or of Codrus, who procured his own death to save his country, since instances of equal courage in braving death are by no means uncommon in our own times. At the siege of Turin one Mica is said to have fired a mine, and purposely destroyed himself with the enemy. And how many commanders of ships have purposely blown them up rather than strike their colours. These, it may be said, are the effects of a refined sense of honour, which is acquired in a highly improved state of society. But we may see what may be called the native strength of the mind, in the North American Indians, with whom, when prisoners, it is very common to refuse dying by their own hands, on purpose to show the honour of their country, in  
supporting

supporting the tortures which they know are prepared for them.

Facts like these, together with those which show the extent of genius in such men as Aristotle, Archimedes, and sir Isaac Newton, give us high ideas of the dignity of human nature, and the capacity of the human mind. But the other side of the picture, which history with equal faithfulness presents to us, gives us a most affecting, and equally instructive view, of our deplorable weakness and frailty, exemplified in the greatest of men.

Hardly any thing gives us a more affecting view of the weakness and inconsistency to which the mind of man is liable, than to see men of sound and clear understandings, in most respects, and of upright honest hearts, fall into sentiments that lead to gross and painful superstitions. A most remarkable instance of this was Pascal, one of the greatest geniuses, and best men, that ever lived. He, with many others, entertained a notion that God made men miserable here, in order to their being happy hereafter; and in consequence of this he imposed upon himself the most disagreeable mortifications. He even  
ordered

ordered a wall to be built before a window of his study, from which he thought he had too agreeable a prospect. He also wore a girdle full of sharp points next to his skin, and while he was eating or drinking any thing that was grateful to his appetite, he was constantly pricking himself, that he might not be sensible of any pleasure. His sister too, who was a woman of fine sense and great piety, actually died of thirst, as she thought, to the glory of God. It was certainly through a weakness of the same nature in the ingenious and excellent Fenelon, that he submitted without reserve to the arbitrary sentence of the pope, when he condemned a book that he published. He even preached to condemn his own book, and forbade his friends to defend it.

They have not only been good men, and of a truly religious turn of mind, who have been subject to such groundless superstitions, but the most vicious and abandoned also. Both kinds of instances show the weakness to which human nature is liable. But whereas a good man who is a slave to superstition is an object of the greatest compassion, a wicked man in the same situation is rather a subject  
of

of ridicule. What, for instance, can be more completely ridiculous than Lewis XI. of France, a man who made no conscience of any villany, going always covered with relics, and wearing a leaden image of the Virgin Mary in his hat, of which it is said he asked pardon for his murders before they were committed. The same prince made a deed of the earldom of Bolloigne to the Virgin Mary.

Even the sentiments of morality, which of all others one would expect to find the most invariable and uncorrupted, are found greatly perverted, and intermixed with notions that are foreign, and even contrary, to morality, in the minds of some whole nations. Thus the Tartars, with whom it is a sin and a capital crime, as Voltaire says, to put a knife into the fire, to lean against a whip, to beat a horse with a bridle, or to break one bone with another, think it no sin, in some cases, to break their word, to plunder, and commit murder. The same Arab who, if he find you at his door claiming hospitality, would receive you as his brother, and conduct you the next day, would not have scrupled to rob and murder you, as his lawful prey, if he  
had



had met you in the desert an hour before. To give instances of the weakness and inconsistency in the human mind, which history presents us with, were endless. These are sufficient to give us an idea how affecting and useful such views are, and at the same time how entertaining to a speculative mind.

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## LECTURE III.

*History tends to strengthen the Sentiments of Virtue by the Variety of Views in which it exhibits the Conduct of Divine Providence, showing important Events brought about by inconsiderable Means, or contrary to the Intention of those Persons who were the principal Agents in them. A Regard to Divine Providence heightens our Satisfaction in reading History, and tends to throw an agreeable Light upon the most gloomy and disgusting Parts of it. History, in the Misfortunes and Hardships to which the most distinguished Personages have been reduced, gives a deep Conviction of the Instability of all human Things, prepares our Minds to submit to Adversity*

*versity with Resignation, and makes us acquiesce in the more humble Stations of Life. Lastly, the most common Observations on the Tempers and Manners of Men, such as we may collect every Day from common Life, affect us much more strongly when we see them exemplified in the History of great Personages. At what Age History ought to be read. In what Sense proper for every Age.*

THIRDLY, History tends to strengthen the sentiments of virtue, by the variety of views in which it exhibits the conduct of divine providence, and points out the hand of God, in the affairs of men. For certainly whatever suggests to us the idea of a divine Being, either in the end, or means, of great events, must be favourable to piety and virtue.

That the world has a governor, or *superintendant*, is just as evident as that it had a *maker*. For no person does any thing without some design, or without intending to make some use of it. A telescope is made to be used for the better distinguishing distant objects, the eye itself for seeing things at a moderate distance from us, and no doubt, *men*, and the *world*, for some end or other.

And

And as the same Being that made the greatest things, made the smallest things also, all being parts of the same system, some use, no doubt, is made of every thing, even what appears to us the most inconsiderable; so that, as our Saviour observed, “ a sparrow  
“ falls not to the ground without God, and  
“ the very hairs of our heads are numbered.” Also, as nothing was *made*, so nothing can *come to pass* without the knowledge, the appointment, or permission of God. Something, therefore, is intended by every thing that *happens*, as well as by every thing that is *made*. But in little things a design is not so apparent as in greater and more striking things. Though, therefore, the hand of God be really in every thing that happens, and that is recorded in history, our attention is more forcibly drawn to it in great events, and especially in things which happen in a manner unexpected by us.

How can we help acknowledging the hand of God when we see great and important events brought about by seemingly trifling and inconsiderable means; or by means which seem to have little or no relation to the end; as when our king James and both houses of  
parliament

parliament were rescued from destruction, by a letter which a conspirator sent with a view to save one of the members of the House of Lords for whom he had a friendship?

Who would have imagined that the desire which Henry VIII. had to be divorced from his wife, would have brought about the reformation in England? The indiscretion of a Portuguese priest, who would not give place to one of the king's officers in Japan, and the obstinacy of the jesuits, in refusing to give up the house which a nobleman had given them, when his son claimed it back again, occasioned the extirpation of the Roman catholic religion in that country.

But what most of all shows the hand of Providence, and the weakness and shortsightedness of men, are great events being brought about contrary to the intention of the persons who were the chief instruments of them, and by the very means which were intended to produce a contrary event. Thus persecution has always been the means of promoting the persecuted religion; insomuch, that it is become a common proverb, that "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church." Thus, likewise, Athens, Lacedæmon, Carthage,

thage, Rome, and many other states have been ruined by their own successes. Philip II. of Spain, by his intolerable oppression, was the cause of the freedom of the states of Holland. Such has often been the consequence of wicked men over-acting their parts. Thus also the senate of Rome was once saved by Catiline's making the signal for the massacre too soon.

With what satisfaction may a person who has an eye to divine Providence read such a passage as the following in Machiavel, that Borgia had so well conducted his measures, that he must have been master of Rome, and of the whole ecclesiastical estate, after the death of his father, but that it was impossible for him to foresee that he himself would be at the point of death at the very time that Alexander his father finished his life. They were both poisoned at an entertainment, by a mistake of the waiter, who served them with the wine which was to have taken off their enemies.

It is no uncommon thing, in the history of divine Providence, that persons being known to have abilities shall have been the means of keeping them in obscurity, while others have

been advanced in consequence of their seeming insignificance. If Augustus had shown any capacity, as a statesman or general; any greatness of soul, or any thing in the least enterprising, at first, he would probably never have been master of the Roman empire. But while Cicero, and Antony, in their turns, thought to make a tool of him, they, unknown to themselves, increased his power and influence, at the expence of their own.

In this view it is very amusing, and useful, to consider to what a different purpose, the labour, powers, and works of men, and nations, have been employed, from what was originally thought of and intended; as that the Romans, after all their conquests of other nations, should be often governed by savage and tyrannical barbarians, such as Maximin and others; and that that city, the mistress of the world, which was built by Romulus, and whose power was enlarged by such men as Camillus, Scipio Africanus, Marius, Sylla, Cæsar, Pompey, and Trajan, should now be in subjection to the pope, and the seat of a power totally different from what had before resided in it, and of which the founders could have no conception. How far was Constan-



tine from foreseeing, that Constantinople would be the capital of the Turkish empire, and the principal support of a religion opposite to that which he established. How far, also, were the heads of the Grecian commonwealths from foreseeing, that their country, the seat of arts and liberty, would ever become the most ignorant and enslaved of all the states of Europe.

A regard to divine Providence is, likewise, extremely useful to heighten our satisfaction in reading history, and throw an agreeable light upon the most gloomy and disgusting parts of it. With a view to this, the most disagreeable objects in history will bear to be looked upon with satisfaction. And could we see every event, in all its connexions, and most distant influences, we should, no doubt, perfectly acquiesce in every thing that comes to pass under the government of God; in seeing that all evils lead to, and terminate in, a greater good. But in many cases, we see events which give us pain at first sight, and which occasion much regret and disappointment, to those who give more scope to their passions than to their reflection while they are reading; which, if we look

no farther than the next and immediate consequences, we shall be thoroughly satisfied and pleased with.

No person conversant with the ancient classical historians, and who has thereby acquired a classical taste, and classical notions of *liberty*, but regrets that Rome, in the height of its glory, should fall under the power of masters. But it is because he does not consider that all the provinces of the vast Roman empire were most miserably oppressed and plundered by the republican governors, who had little to fear from courts of justice; but were relieved and happy under the government of persons who lived in constant fear of being accused of mal-administration, to an inexorable master. Nay the provinces were not much less happy under Tiberius and Nero, than under Trajan and the Antonines.

A reader of Thucydides is apt to be extremely mortified at the ill-treatment of Alcibiades, and the defeat of the Athenians before Syracuse. But it is because he does not think what would probably have been the consequence of the success of that expedition; namely, the slavery of Greece, and, from the nature of its government, the confusion and

and slavery of Athens too. As success naturally points out our favourite hero to us, we cannot help conceiving a violent indignation against Hanno, for taking no more care to send recruits to Hannibal, after the battle of Cannæ. But justly did he, and all Carthage, dread the power of Hannibal, when master of Rome, who was able to change the whole form of their government, even when he was conquered.

These obvious remarks I mention here, to show the necessity of thought and *reflection* in reading history. Farther observations of this kind, and such as are less obvious, I shall reserve for another part of this course of lectures, in which I shall endeavour to enter a little farther into the views and conduct of divine providence, in the government of the world.

In the fourth place, history, in the misfortunes and hardships to which the most distinguished personages have been reduced, gives us a deep conviction of the instability of all human things, and prepares our minds, to submit to adversity with more patience and resignation, as to a condition from which we see none are exempt. Even the misfortunes

and disappointments of brave and good men, who have brought themselves into difficulties, in consequence of their generous attempts, in favour of the liberties and best interests of mankind, do not, as exhibited in history, in the least tend to slacken our zeal in the same glorious cause; at the same time that they make us more prudent in the choice and prosecution of our measures, to attain the same end, and dispose us to yield to disappointment with a better grace. That an acquaintance with history has this effect, I appeal to what any person feels after reading of the untimely end of Agis, Cato, Brutus, Hampden, and the great Algernon Sydney. The honourable mention that will, to the end of the world, be made of such glorious, though unfortunate men as these, will raise up more friends to the same great interests; while their misfortunes will only serve to make those friends more prudent, and therefore probably more successful in their endeavours.

But, independently of these martyrs of liberty raising up more, and more successful patrons of it, the consideration of the remarkable reverses of fortune, in the history of considerable personages, has a fine effect upon  
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the human mind. It wonderfully softens and calms it, and gives it an excellent temper for encountering with the vicissitudes of life. What other sensations do we feel, while we read that Henrietta, daughter of Henry IV. of France, and wife to Charles I. of England, was reduced to the utmost extremity of poverty; and that her daughter, who was afterwards married to a brother of Lewis XIV. is said to have lain in bed for want of coals to keep her warm, while the people of Paris, blind with rage, paid no attention to their sufferings. The same kind of sensations we feel, when we read of the great and successful general Belisarius (if the story be true) begging his bread; of Cortez, the renowned conqueror of Mexico, living unknown and in disgrace in Spain, and scarce able to get to speak to his master Charles V. though when the king asked, who the fellow was that was so clamorous to speak to him, he cried out, "I am one who have gotten your majesty more provinces, than your father left you towns." He afterwards served in a rank little higher than that of a common soldier on the coast of Barbary.

Fifthly, These great reverses of fortune,



and calamities of men in high stations, at the same time that they are hardly ever known to discourage men of ability and spirit from undertaking the public service, when regularly called to it, may justly make persons who are born to private stations, and who have no opportunity of rising above them, content with their situation. The many who have abdicated royalty, as Christiana queen of Sweden, Charles V. emperor of Germany, Victor Amadeus, king of Sardinia, John Casimir, king of Poland, and others, convince us that crowns do not always sit easy; and that persons in high stations have need of a strong sense of honour and integrity to make their fatigues and misfortunes tolerable.

It is no unuseful sentiment that we collect from reading that Richlieu shortened his days by the uneasiness with which he was devoured in the fulness of his power. What Voltaire says of Lewis XIV. is an excellent memento to the ambitious; that he saw all his family perish by premature deaths; that though, towards the close of his life, he appeared in public as usual, in private the pain of his many misfortunes pierced him to the heart, and threw him into convulsions; that he met  
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with domestic losses at the conclusion of an unsuccessful war, and before he was sure of obtaining a peace, and at a time when a famine had wasted his kingdom; and that he lost in the minds of his subjects, during the last three years of his life, all the respect and esteem he had gained by his great actions.

The advantage of preferring a private situation, especially to entering into the views of faction, we see in the security and long life of Atticus, in the most distracted times of the Roman history; and in Richard Cromwell, who lived to a great age contented and happy, whereas his father never knew what happiness was. The history of very few great statesmen can match that of cardinal Fleury, of whom we read, that his schemes were crowned with success from the year 1726 to 1742; that he lived ninety years, and preserved his faculties unimpaired to the last; which makes his historian say, that, if ever there was a happy man upon earth, it was doubtless cardinal Fleury.

Lastly, those observations on the tempers and manners of men, which we may collect every day from common life, affect us much more strongly when we see them exemplified in the history

history of great personages. We see, for instance, every day, that almost all persons who are intrusted with power abuse it. But this is better exemplified in kings, and ministers of state. We see again that men in low circumstances are apt to be despised, and that court is always paid to the great and the powerful. But this maxim receives a stronger confirmation, and makes a deeper impression, than any occurrence in private life could occasion, when we think what court was paid to Oliver Cromwell, by all the princes of Europe, while Charles II. then in exile, could not obtain an interview with the ministers of either France or Spain; at the treaty of the Pyrenees, though he made a journey on purpose to obtain it.

It is a common and just observation, that, through the inconstancy of our nature, men are liable to conceive hasty and unreasonable disgust at their situation, and yet, when they have changed it, wish to resume it; and this we see exemplified in private life almost every day. But ever so many examples of this kind do not make so great an impression upon us, as the history of Victor Amadeus king of Sardinia, who abdicated the crown through mere caprice,

caprice, but found, as some historian says, that the company of his mistress, who was become his wife, devotion, and the tranquillity of retirement, could not satisfy a soul occupied during fifty years with the affairs of Europe. He was desirous of regaining the throne even by force, and afterwards died in confinement.

How incapable riches and power are to satisfy the mind of man, is an observation which few persons, in the course of their own experience, have not seen occasion to make. But the sentiment makes a deeper impression upon us when we see it exemplified in the history of statesmen and conquerors; and as it is beautifully exhibited in a conversation which passed between Pyrrhus and his minister Cyneas, before their expedition into Italy. The minister asked the king what he proposed to do when he had subdued the Romans? He answered, Pass into Sicily. What then? said the minister. Conquer the Carthaginians, replies the king. And what follows that? says the minister. Be sovereign of Greece, and then enjoy ourselves, said the king. And why, replied the sensible minister, can we not do this *last* now?

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To add one instance more: we see the vanity of the living in their boundless provision for futurity, and in the dissipation of the large fortunes of covetous persons, by the extravagance of their heirs. But it does not affect us near so much as when we are reading in history, that the riches which Sixtus V. amassed in his pontificate, and those which Henry IV. of France had with great difficulty saved, were squandered away within less than a year after their deaths; also that the treasure which Henry VII. of England had raised by every art of extortion went almost as fast.

Thus we have seen how, by history, our minds are agreeably entertained, our passions are exercised, and our judgments are formed, so as either to fit us for the business of life, or furnish us with materials for science; how sentiments of virtue are acquired, and the best moral maxims of conduct are most deeply impressed upon our minds. All these advantages result from history as a *study*. There are other advantages resulting to mankind from it, in a different manner, as only one instrument of recording transactions. How imperfect, for instance, without history, would  
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be our knowledge of genealogies, and consequently of the order of important successions, and how precarious would be the advantage, resulting from conventions and treaties of all kinds, if all the articles of them were repositied only in the memory of the contracting parties. We read that the boundaries of some of the Grecian states were once determined by a verse of Homer, who, in his description of Greece, relates what they were in his time.

The preceding account of the uses of history will assist us in determining what has formerly been a subject of debate among the critics, namely, at what *age* history is proper to be read.

Considering the various uses to which the study of history has been shown to be subservient, I see no reason why we should hesitate to pronounce, that it can neither be begun too early, nor continued too late. If history amuse the imagination, exercise and improve the passions, inspire a taste for true glory, just sentiments of, and a love for, virtue, and thereby form the *temper*, and prepare men for conversing with the world; what can be more proper for young persons? And since the mind cannot be too well furnished in these respects,



respects, and men cannot have too large a stock of this *anticipated experience*, the study of it must be useful while there remains any thing of the part we have to act on the theatre of the world. Moreover, since history furnishes materials for the finest speculations, and the most important sciences, it cannot but be of service while we make any use of our intellectual faculties.

Since history may be considered as containing examples of the sciences of *morals* and *politics* chiefly, no doubt a person who has studied these sciences, is qualified to read history with more pleasure and advantage. But then it must likewise be considered, that it is impossible to be master of these sciences without a knowledge of history. Their influences and uses are reciprocal. Thus the person who has studied the grammar of any language will read authors who have written in it with more ease and advantage. But grammars could never have been made without a previous knowledge of the languages for which they were made, nor even learned, without the use of examples borrowed from those languages.

That young persons are not capable of  
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making a right use of historical examples in a moral respect was obviated when the advantages of history above experience were mentioned. If what was said there be considered, it will appear much safer for a child to be trusted with a piece of history than to hear the common news of the town he lives in. It is certain that neither in the one or the other is exact justice done to the characters of men in the events of their lives. But in history it is done much more completely than it is within the compass of any particular person's observation.

A proper regard, no doubt, ought to be had to the age, experience, and previously acquired knowledge, as well as the intended sphere of life, of the persons to whom particular histories are recommended. It would be very preposterous to advise any person to begin the study of history with such writers as Polybius or Tacitus, and to end with Livy, Quintus Curtius, or Cornelius Nepos. Common sense will direct that histories which tend chiefly to amuse the imagination; or inforce the plainest instructions in morals, ought rather to be recommended to young persons, who will both have the most relish for such works,

works, and to whom they will be of the greatest use; and that histories which furnish more exercise for the judgment should be reserved for an age in which that faculty is riper. However, there can be no great inconvenience in young persons being indulged in reading almost all histories promiscuously. Their natural disposition, and previous acquirements, will direct them to what they are most capable of profiting by, and the higher uses of the same works may be safely left to be reaped at a second perusal, in a more advanced stage of life. No general history is better calculated for the use of young persons than that of Rollin.

## PART II.

## OF THE SOURCES OF HISTORY.

## LECTURE IV.

*Importance of Records. What have been the principal Methods of transmitting to Posterity the Knowledge of Events, with the Advantages and Imperfections of each. Oral Tradition. Dependent and independent Evidence. To estimate the Value of single Evidences. Historical Examples. The Corruption of Tradition exemplified in ecclesiastical History, and the ancient History of Egypt. Difference between antient and modern Times with Respect to the Communication of Intelligence.*

THOUGH it cannot be supposed that mankind, in very early and rude ages, could be aware of any of the advantages which arise from History as a *study*, or that they could even have much occasion to transmit the knowledge of any of their transactions to posterity ;

terity; yet it must be acknowledged, that the apprehension of the usefulness of some contrivance for this purpose must very soon have arisen in the minds of a people who were forming themselves into any kind of *society*. No society, for instance, can subsist without compacts and agreements; and these are so manifestly liable to be forgotten, or evaded (particularly as the obligation of keeping a promise is seldom found to have much force among barbarians) that it must have immediately appeared desirable to have some standing memorials of them, as a better security for their observance than the memory, or the honour, of the contracting parties. Various other more extensive uses of *records* could not fail to occur in a more improved state of society; and with the improvements of society, and the multiplied uses of records, it may reasonably be supposed that the methods of recording would likewise improve. Accordingly we find that these have been various; and the traces of past events which the practice of these methods has left in the world, are the chief sources to which all historians must have recourse for their materials.

Under this second head, *of the sources of history,*

*history*, I propose to enumerate all, or at least the principal, methods that have been made use of for transmitting to posterity the knowledge of past events; and I shall treat of them in what I apprehend to be their natural order, beginning with the first and least perfect, and ending with the last and most perfect, that human ingenuity has yet invented. Under each head I shall consider the nature of the evidence on which it rests, and give a general account of the information we may expect from it. After these *direct* sources of history, I shall mention the principal of those means by which we are able *indirectly* to ascertain, and transmit the knowledge of important facts.

Before the invention of the arts of writing, carving, and painting, *Oral Tradition* must have been the only vehicle of historical knowledge; and, with respect to this, it is well worth our notice, that the wisdom of Providence has made provision for the instruction of youth in the dispositions and circumstances of their aged parents. When the active scenes of their lives are closed, their active powers being spent, but the active passions of their nature still so much awake, as deeply to in-



terest them in public transactions, since they can have but little share in, and enjoyment of, the *present*, they are perpetually reviewing, and taking pleasure in relating, the *past scenes* of their lives; which, being impressed when their minds were vigorous and retentive, are faithfully retained in memory. Thus the natural talkativeness of old age, meeting with the natural inquisitiveness and curiosity of youth, makes a happy coincidence of circumstances, very favourable to the propagation of knowledge and instruction.

It must be confessed, and it is obvious to conceive, that this method of conveying historical knowledge must have been very imperfect, and inadequate for several important uses of history. But, notwithstanding this, it might have been much more extensive and exact than we, who chiefly make use of different and more perfect methods, can well imagine. It is universally true, that when any art has been long disused, it grows less perfect, and more insufficient, than when mankind, through want of any other, were obliged to make the most of it; and it is therefore apt to suffer more upon comparison with a new, and more cultivated art than



in the nature of things, it ought to do. Thus we see that persons who have no knowledge of written numbers are much readier in mental computation, than those who have been used to have recourse to their pen upon every occasion.

It is very possible, therefore, that we may entertain too mean an opinion of the state of historical knowledge before the invention of the present arts of recording events; since persons who had no histories to read would make more inquiries, and take more pains to procure information from all quarters, and would, of course, be more capable of informing others, than any persons now living could be with respect to what they have not learned from books. It is not improbable but that, in those unlettered ages, every elderly person would be possessed of a little treasure of history; which would not consist of his own family stories only, but contain many particulars relative to the general state of his country, and other neighbouring nations.

These informations were the sources from which Herodotus derived the greatest part of his history; and the growing reputation of

that author demonstrates how much real and useful knowledge a man of sense and inquiry may get by such channels.

To secure the remembrance of very important facts, particularly of compacts and treaties, we find it to have been the custom in all nations before the use of letters, and even continued long after their introduction, to recite them before large stated assemblies of people. Hereby, both an air of importance was given to them, and a greater number of witnesses provided for them. For many ages in this country, every contract of importance was made in some public court; and no bargain or sale of goods was valid unless made in the open market. It is not wholly improbable, but that it might be in consequence of such customs as these that Herodotus was led to recite his written history before the general assembly of Greece at the Olympic games.

It is a very good method which the Indians of North America use, to enable them to retain in memory all the articles of a complex treaty. The public orator delivers to one of his attendants a string of wampum upon the recital of every article; so that each is in-  
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trusted to a different person, and he is provided with a memorial, that may frequently remind him of it, and thereby the more deeply impress it on his memory.

The paintings of the Mexicans answered the same purpose much better, and contained a pretty full history of the nation from a very early period. They consisted of the figures of natural objects, sometimes contracted into *hieroglyphics*, mixed with many symbolical characters; and the names of persons and places were distinguished by the figures of the objects which the names expressed. Thus, with the help of tradition (there being persons whose business it was to explain these pictures) they conveyed to future ages a very competent knowledge of the past.

But, notwithstanding every method of improving merely oral tradition, it seems to have been not without reason, that sir Isaac Newton lays it down as a general maxim, that things said to have been done above a hundred, or two hundred, years before the use of letters are worthy of little credit. And if we consider the nature of evidence, the reasonableness of this assertion will be more apparent; and particularly if we attend to the

great difference there is between dependent and independent evidence.

If the evidence of a fact depend upon a number of original witnesses, no way connected with one another, so that the insufficiency of one shall not at all affect the rest, the fact will not be improbable unless the deficiency of credibility in them all be very great. But, if the evidence be supported by a number of witnesses dependent upon one another, so that the insufficiency of any one shall wholly invalidate that of all who come after, the credibility of each separately taken must be very great, to make the evidence of the whole authentic. In the former case, the more witnesses there are, the better. For each evidence, though ever so weak, increases the probability, and brings us nearer to certainty. But in the latter case the fewer there are, the better; for each evidence, though ever so strong, lessens the probability, and makes the fact more uncertain.

This subject Dr. Hartley has illustrated by the mathematical doctrine of chances, in the following manner; putting  $\frac{1}{a}$  for the absolute value of each dependent evidence, or the insufficiency of each independent evidence,  
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absolute certainty in the former case, and absolute uncertainty in the latter being equal to unity, and making the number of witnesses the *power* of  $n$  in both. From this it will be manifest, upon a little attention, that provided the power ( $n$ ) be considerable ( $a$ ) may be very little without greatly diminishing the value of the expression; that is, without greatly lessening the probability in the one case, or the improbability in the other. For example, let  $a=3$  and  $n=10$ ; then  $a^{\frac{1}{n}} = \frac{1}{30,000,000,000}$  which, in independent evidence, will be little less than absolute certainty; and in dependent evidence, little less than absolute uncertainty.

The value of each separate evidence must be estimated from considering the opportunity any person had of knowing the truth, and his fidelity in communicating it. In historical evidence, where an author's moral character is not known, his veracity will be judged of according to his situation, by considering whether it was such as would lay him under any bias to falsify, or not.

From the first of these considerations we infer that the histories of England, Scotland, and other European states, before the Roman conquests, and the introduction of letters (as they



they are grounded chiefly upon oral tradition) must be very uncertain: and hence the marks of fable in some of the first books of almost all very ancient histories. From the second consideration we are led to give little credit to the accounts of either friends or enemies in the histories of rival nations, and particularly of opposite sects or parties, unless we have an opportunity of comparing the accounts of both sides. Thus the character which the Romans have given of the Carthaginians, and even their accounts of facts in their intercourse with them, will be for ever reckoned dubious; whereas the most exact and impartial history of their transactions with the Grecian states may be extracted from the accounts of both nations. And from both considerations is founded the great degree of credit that is universally given to the histories of Thucydides and Xenophon. Both these authors lived in the time of which they write; both, though Athenians, and employed in public characters by their country, were ill-used by their countrymen, and obliged to take refuge among the Lacedemonians; so that it may be pretty fairly presumed, that one prejudice would nearly balance another, and



and their minds be left, as nearly as possible, in a state of absolute impartiality.

The comparison of the Egyptian histories of Herodotus, Diodorus Siculus, and what Plato relates from a Poem of Solon's, shows the natural progress of fiction in history, when there are no records to curb and restrain the invention of a people bent upon magnifying their antiquities. After Cambyfes had destroyed the records of Egypt, the priests of that country were continually adding to the catalogue of their kings, and carrying more backward the dates of past transactions, as appears by the following circumstances. Solon, Herodotus, and Diodorus, all travelled into Egypt at different and successive periods of time, and all had their information from the priests of that country. According to Solon, who was the first of the three that visited Egypt, the wars of the great gods happened in the days of Cecrops, but according to Herodotus they must have been more ancient ; and Diodorus, who wrote four hundred years after Herodotus, inserts many nameless kings between those whom he placed in continual succession ; so that their earliest

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history was then removed into the remotest antiquity.

The credibility of historians who treat of their own times, and do not compile from the writings of others, particularly of those who themselves bore a part in public affairs, as Thucydides, Xenophon, Cæsar, Clarendon, Sully, &c. come under the consideration of original evidences. With respect to writers of this class, it is obvious to remark, that the ancients were in circumstances in which it was much less easy to receive information than the moderns, by reason of their want of the methods which are now in use for the speedy conveying of intelligence. For these we are indebted to that freer intercourse which more extensive politics and commerce have promoted between different states, and especially the establishment of posts in all the civilized countries of Europe.

In ancient times a nation might be subdued, and hardly any but its next neighbours hear of it. This may be the reason why so little notice is taken of the wars of the Romans and Carthaginians by the contemporary Greek writers, who do not so strictly confine themselves

themselves to their subject, as purposely to decline the mention of foreign incidents that would embellish their works. For a like reason it is remarkable that all the states of Europe were long ignorant both of Jenghis Khan and his conquests. But since commerce and navigation have been so much extended, nothing can happen in the most remote parts of the civilized world but the knowledge of it is immediately communicated to all the rest.

It is a pretty just observation of Mr. Hume, that, in general, there is more candour and sincerity in the ancient historians, but less exactness and care than in the moderns. The reason of the latter may be, that the first writers of history could not be aware of the *use* of such minute exactness in relating a variety of historical circumstances. For example, not having observed, or sufficiently attended to, such subjects as government, laws, manners, arts, &c. they were not aware that the progress of them would ever become a matter of such general and reasonable curiosity as it is now. Also, having seen no important end answered by chronological exactness, and having no fixed æras to guide them, they would naturally not be so attentive to  
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fix the precise *dates* of events, as the more extensive views of modern historians make it desirable that they had been.

On the other hand, the ancient and classical historians had an advantage in the *subject* of their histories, with respect to the certainty of intelligence, concerning the objects and motives of schemes and transactions. They treat chiefly of the politics and wars of republican states, in which nothing can be kept secret. For besides that modern politics are much more complex and refined than the ancient, more pains are taken to conceal them; which, in European courts and monarchies, or states in which the executive power is lodged in one hand, or a few hands, it is more easy to do. Notwithstanding this, so much are the methods of coming at intelligence multiplied, and improved, in the more connected modern states of Europe, that the sagacity even of some contemporary writers has arrived at remarkable certainty and exactness in their accounts of public measures; and even with respect to those nations which are the most famed for the intricacy of their politics. Gerard, secretary to the Duke d'Epernon, relates, that when Davila's history was  
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read by that old man, who had been a principal actor in that age, he expressed his wonder how the author could be so well informed of the most secret councils and measures of those times.

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## LECTURE V.

*Of historical Poems. Those of Homer. Public Monuments with traditional Explications. Historical Customs. Historical Names of Persons, Countries, Towns, &c. Monuments with emblematical and alphabetical Inscriptions.*

A METHOD of transmitting the knowledge of important events with greater accuracy than by simple narration would be by *historical poems*, with which few barbarous nations have been long wholly unprovided. A story reduced to any kind of *metre* would suffer little by repetition; and it can hardly be supposed that any variation in the repetition would be of such a nature as to affect the general facts it contained. Considering that all the learning

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ing of those nations must necessarily consist of those poems, and that, being composed chiefly in honour of their founders and heroes, they would be constantly sung in religious ceremonies, and on festivals instituted to their memory (which circumstances would greatly contribute to extend and perpetuate them), it is easily conceived what use an historian, who could come at the knowledge of such poems, might make of them.

The bards among the Britons and ancient Germans, and the Scaldri among the Scandinavians, are most worthy of our notice in this respect, as they were an order of men whose sole employment it was to compose and repeat those poems. Olaus Magnus was much indebted to the poems of the Scaldri in his history of one of the northern nations. It were to be wished that the poems of the Welsh and Irish were better known.

Even the poems of Homer (particularly the *Iliad*) bear evident marks of their being founded on fact, notwithstanding the mixture of the absurd Grecian mythology with them. This author is much more circumstantial than a mere writer of fiction, particularly so ancient a writer, would ever have thought of being.



being. The remarkable distinctness of his characters is likewise no bad foundation for supposing that they were copied from real life. In both these respects the *Æneid* of Virgil is very defective. The historical part of that work is neither so circumstantial, nor are the characters introduced into it so distinctly marked. It has, therefore, much more the air of a romance.

Particularity in facts and characters necessarily belong, and closely adhere, to whatever has actually happened. It is therefore almost impossible to exclude the mention of the particular circumstances of time, place, and character in a relation of facts; whereas these being superfluous in the views of a writer of fiction, and not necessarily obtruding themselves into the story, they are generally omitted. Besides, such stories are commonly more agreeable to the trite maxims of criticism, as being free from every thing that is not essential to the main story. But this kind of correctness is purchased at the expence of what is one of the best characteristics of truth. And happy has it been for the cause of truth that the importance of introducing such a number of seemingly unnecessary par-

particulars into narrations was not more early attended to, as hereby it is much more easy to distinguish truth from fiction in ancient writings.

Another means of preserving traditions, which has been more general than historical poems, is by *visible monuments*, such as *pillars*, *edifices*, or mere *heaps of stones*, erected upon occasion of any remarkable event. These monuments, engaging the attention of the rising generation, would occasion such a succession of inquiries and informations, concerning the origin and use of them, as would long preserve the knowledge of the transactions they were connected with. Of this nature probably was the tower of Babel, as well as the pillar that Jacob erected at Hebron, and the heap of stones jointly raised by him and Laban as a memorial of their mutual reconciliation and covenant.

As these monuments had no *inscriptions*, their explanation must only have been traditional; but as the facts were connected with visible and striking associated circumstances, they would have a great advantage over those conveyed by mere oral tradition. The sight of the monument could not fail to revive,

in the minds of all who lived in the neighbourhood, the remembrance of the use and design of it : and while the monument subsisted, it can hardly be supposed that even a migration of the people would be followed by an absolute loss of the history. For the newcomers, though not equally interested in the events referred to with the late inhabitants, could not help being induced, by principles common to human nature, to get what information they could procure with respect to such curiosities in the countries they settled in.

Giving *names* to countries, towns, &c. has been made use of as an expedient for perpetuating the memory of their planters or founders, from times of the earliest antiquity to the present age ; from Enoch, which had its name from the son of Cain, down to Pittsbury, which was so called in the late war. Indeed there is hardly a name given either to a person, or place in the Old Testament without an historical reason for it. And where transactions would not be to the honour of the persons concerned in them, the officious zeal of their enemies has sometimes affixed opprobrious names and epithets to the places

which were the theatre of them, which bid equally fair to adhere to them. Thus the field in which pope Gregory treated with Lewis the Feeble, when they were both known to enter into the negociation with a view to deceive one another, went for a long time, and is perhaps to this day known, by the name of *the field of lies*.

Of the same nature with public monuments and traditional explanations, are *national customs*, in commemoration of remarkable historical events; such as the Athenians sending annually a ship to Delos, the paschal supper among the Jews, the Lord's supper among Christians, our making bonfires on the fifth of November, and carrying oak boughs on the twenty-ninth of May.

The philosopher Anaximander effectually provided for his not being forgotten; when, being asked by the magistrates at Lampfacum, where he had resided, what they should do to honour his memory, he made the seemingly small and simple request, that the boys might have leave to play on the anniversary of his decease.

These historical customs would not, indeed, like historical monuments, remain in  
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the country where they were first established, and thereby come to the knowledge of the new inhabitants; but, which is an equivalent advantage, they are easily transferred with the people that migrate, wherever they go; and in another respect they are more useful to an historian, as they assist him in tracing the origin of colonies, which would naturally retain the customs of their mother country. Thus Newton infers from what we read of the practice of circumcision in Colchis and Iberia, that the inhabitants of those countries were probably a colony of Egyptians, and perhaps left there in the expedition of Sesostris. By the same manner of reasoning the Chinese have also of late been suspected to have been a colony of Egyptians, and the present inhabitants of North America to be of the race of the ancient Sarmatians, inhabiting the north eastern parts of Asia.

It is not improbable but that the corruption to which the traditional explanations of naked monuments is unavoidably liable, might first suggest to mankind the expediency of some contrivance to make them their own interpreters; either by the form, or the situation of them, as in the pyramids of Egypt,

trophies of victory, &c. or by engraving upon them some emblems, or devices, expressive of the uses they were intended to answer. Thus Sesostris is said to have erected pillars in the countries he subdued, and to have engraved upon some of them emblems expressive of the cowardice or weakness of the inhabitants, upon others symbols of the vigour and spirit with which they had opposed his invasion.

As the names of *men*, in all original languages, were borrowed from those of *things*, the figures of those things which bore the same name with any person, engraved upon his sepulchre, was no bad method of expressing to whom it belonged. This method might have been used before alphabetical writing was invented; and as the bishop of Clogher ingeniously conjectures, may easily be supposed to have given rise to the worship of animals and vegetables among the Egyptians.

As, in after ages, improvements were made in this method by the Greeks who settled in Egypt, who erected statues holding in their hands the things which the former inhabitants had been satisfied with portraying upon the sepulchres, the same learned person, with  
great



great appearance of reason, conjectures that the statue of Jupiter Casius holding a pomegranate in his hand was originally designed for Caphtor, who is mentioned by Moses, and whose name signifies a pomegranate in Hebrew, which was the original language of that country. This conjecture receives additional confirmation from considering that this Caphtor, who seems to have come along with his great grandfather Ham into Egypt, was the first Egyptian warrior that we meet with any account of in real history, who extended his conquests beyond the boundaries of Egypt, and, in company with his brethren the Philistines, dispossessed the Avim of that part of the land of Canaan which was afterwards called Philistia, and was in after times deified. Nor is it improbable that he might have been the same person also with Dionysius the elder, or the great Bacchus.

The apparent convenience of those monuments to receive inscriptions would probably set men's ingenuity to work, and greatly accelerate the invention of *writing*, both hieroglyphical and alphabetical. And there is reason to believe that letters, and characters of all kinds, were made upon wood, stone, me-

tal, and such like durable materials, long before they were made use of in common life.

The imperfection of monuments, even with inscriptions, is that they could record only a *few events*, in a manner destitute of *circumstances*, and that they are not easily multiplied, so that, remaining single, and little care being taken to renew them, the materials would in time moulder away, and the inscription become effaced. And the attention which was not sufficient to keep them in repair, would hardly suffice for the preservation of the traditional explications. The Arundelian marbles, which contain all the leading events of the Grecian history till sixty years after the death of Alexander the Great; and the Capitoline marbles, which contain a catalogue of the Roman magistrates, and the principal events of their history, during the time of the commonwealth, are justly reckoned among the most valuable remains of monumental inscriptions.

## LECTURE VI.

*Of Coins and Medals. Their Origin and Use in History. The principal Information we receive from them. The Progress of Letters traced by their Means. Addison's Use of Medals. Ancient and modern Coins compared, with a View both to History and Taste. Of the Origin and Use of Heraldry.*

COINS and medals, with respect to their uses in History, may be considered as a kind of *portable monuments*. The materials of both are similar, and the events they record are single, and remarkable. The small size of a coin does not even admit of its being so circumstantial as a monument; and though, for the same reason, it be more liable to be lost, it is also more capable of being concealed, and is not exposed to the injuries of the weather. And as great numbers are struck at the same time, they are easily multiplied, so that, upon the whole, they stand a much fairer chance of being seen by posterity. Accordingly, we have innumerable more coins that  
were

were struck in ancient times than there are ancient monuments standing in the world; and though we may be more liable to be imposed upon by pretended *antiques*, this consideration affects the virtuoso more than the historian. For if the new ones be exact copies of ancient coins, they corrupt no history; and it can hardly be worth any person's while to coin a piece whose known existence has not acquired it some degree of reputation.

If we attend only to the original, and primary, use of coins, we ought to make no mention of them among the *direct* methods of recording events. For all the ancient coins, which have now obtained the name of *medals*, were nothing more than the stamped money of ancient nations. Yet as the monumental use of such portable pieces of metal, struck by the direction of a state, were so very obvious; it was not long before this double use of them was attended to. We know nothing of the impression of the *Cræssii*, coins so called from Cræsus, who is the first prince in the world whose coined money is mentioned by historians, and which were afterwards recoined by Darius the Mede, and from him received the name of *Darics*. But the

the Latins coined their first money with the head of Saturn on one side, and the figure of a ship on the other, in memory of his coming into Italy by sea; and upon every new event, or the accession of a new magistrate in the Roman empire, the dies of their coins were changed, to take proper notice of that new circumstance. No anecdotes, indeed, of a private nature are found on them. For though some few pieces under the emperors were coined in honour of the senate, the army, or the people; no private persons had that honour, except they were related to the emperor.

Such a number of events have been recorded by ancient medals, and so great has been the care of the moderns, in collecting and preserving them, that they now give great light to history; in confirming such passages as are true in old authors, in ascertaining what was before doubtful, and in recording such as were omitted. It is remarkable that history scarce makes any mention of Balbec, or Palmyra, whose ruins are so famous; and we have little knowledge of them but what is supplied by inscriptions. It is by this means that Mr. Vaillant has disembroiled a  
a history

a history which was lost to the world before his time. For out of a short collection of medals he has given us an entire chronicle of the kings of Syria; though it will hardly be regarded as supplying any important defect in history, that medals inform us of wives and children of emperors, which have not been taken notice of by any person whatever.

All the principal events of the reign of Lewis XIV. have been recorded in a set of medals, struck for that very purpose. But the inconvenience attending modern medals is, that, not being used as the current coin of any state, and being made of very costly materials, they are confined to the cabinets of a few persons. This was not the case of any of the ancient medals, except a few of a larger size, and more curious workmanship, which were struck by the emperors for presents to their friends, foreign princes, or ambassadors, &c. and which we now distinguish by the name of *medallions*.

But medals are not only, or perhaps chiefly, valuable as they are a means of preserving the knowledge of the leading events in history; they have likewise been a means of transmitting to us a more perfect knowledge of  
many



many things which we are desirous of forming an idea of, than any history, by means of verbal description, could possibly give us. We find upon them traces of *customs* and *manners*, the figures of ancient buildings, instruments, habits, and of a variety of things which shew the state of the *arts* and conveniencies of life, in the age wherein the medals were struck; and many things in *nature* which historians have passed unnoticed, as being familiar in the times in which they wrote, or have omitted, as not being aware that they would ever engage the curiosity of after ages.

It is also very amusing to view upon medals the features of the great men of antiquity; which, if they were struck in an age in which the arts flourished, as is the case with many of the Roman, and particularly of the Grecian medals, we can have no doubt but that they are sufficiently exact. And even if they were struck in an age which did not excel in the arts of painting, statuary, and carving; yet, as faces are chiefly drawn upon coins in *profile*, any person who has taken notice of *shadows*, may conceive that a very striking likeness may easily be hit off in that way.

However,

However, in general, so extremely exact are the drawings of most single objects upon the old medals of the best ages, that even those famous painters Raphael, Le Bruyn, and Rubens, thought it worth their while thoroughly to study them, and preserve cabinets of them. And indeed the generality of figures on many of the Grecian medals have a design, an attitude, a force, and a delicacy, in the expression even of the muscles and veins of human figures, and they are supported by so high a relief, that they infinitely surpass both the Roman medals, and most of the moderns. The only defect in the drawing upon old medals is, that buildings, and other objects, are seen only in front, and never in perspective, an art with which the ancients were but little acquainted.

Upon medals are seen plans of the most considerable *buildings* of ancient Rome. One might make an entire gallery, says Mr. Addison, out of the plans that are to be met with on the reverses of several old coins. We see also the *habits*, and *dresses* of different persons, in different ages; and moreover not only *things* but *customs*, civil and religious, are preserved upon coins, as sacrifices, triumphs, congiaries,

congiaries, allocutions, decursions, lectisterniums, and many other antiquated names and ceremonies, that we should not have had so just a notion of, were they not still preserved on coins. Without the help of coins, as the same author prettily observes, we should never have known which of the emperors was the first that wore a beard, or rode in stirrups.

Old coins exhibit likewise the general *character* and *taste* of the several emperors. Thus we see Nero with a fiddle, and Commodus dressed in his lion's skin; though we are not to trust to coins for the characters of princes. If so, Claudius would be as great a conqueror as Julius Cæsar, and Domitian as good a man as Titus. For though the coinage at Rome was subject to the direction of the senate, there is no doubt but that in this, as in every thing else, they consulted the taste and pleasure of the emperors.

Several of these advantages medals possess in common with some monumental inscriptions. They also agree in this, that from medals and inscriptions only we can form any idea of the progress of the art and manner of *writing* in different nations and ages. Writ-  
ing

ing upon other materials could not be expected to be so durable. In fact, the oldest manuscripts are few, and modern, in comparison of thousands of coins and inscriptions.

Upon medals are preserved the entire forms of many ancient *edifices*, and probably the attitudes of famous *statues*, and copies of celebrated *paintings*, of which there are now no other remains. What confirms this conjecture is, that four of the most beautiful statues extant, viz. Hercules of Farnese, Venus de Medicis, Apollo of Belvedere, and the famous Marcus Aurelius on horseback, do all of them make their appearance on ancient medals; though this was not known till the statues themselves were discovered.

On the subject of the use of ancient medals (though it be an use of them that has little relation to history) I shall just mention the principal subject of Mr. Addison's ingenious treatise on medals, viz. that ancient medals and ancient poetry throw great light upon one another. He has there exhibited a variety of examples, in which the poet, and the artist who made the medal, have had the same *thought*, or copied from the very same common original; the very same thing being described

scribed in verse, and expressed in sculpture. He has likewise presented us with a curious set of medals which clear up several difficult passages in old authors, and he has produced many passages from the poets, which explain the reverses of several medals; so that the science of medals makes no inconsiderable figure in the *Belles Lettres*.

What the ancients made a secondary and subordinate use of their coins, modern European states have attended to, as a primary and direct object. They have struck a variety of medals with no other view than to celebrate some illustrious person, or to perpetuate the knowledge of some memorable event. For modern medals do not pass current in payment, as money; but at the same time that they answer this, their primary use, more completely, by containing more circumstances of a transaction, and being furnished with more precise dates; in every other respect they show a manifest want of judgment and true taste; and, but that it is impossible we should be deceived in the manners and customs of our own times, they might greatly mislead us in those respects.

With the method of coining, we have

flavishly copied the manners, customs, habits, and even the religion, of the ancients, with the same absurdity, and in the same degree, as we have done in our poetry. This, from the nature of things, must ever be the fate of all *imitations*, that are not made immediately from nature. If we copy from other imitations, we shall always copy too much, an error which the inventors of any art, who copy only from nature and real life, are not liable to. For this reason every borrowed art will always betray its original. Thus, though, in ancient medals, we may trace all the variations of mode in dress, in the modern we cannot; all persons without distinction, being commonly seen in a Roman habit. From the ancient medals we may form some idea of the customs and religion of the country in which they were struck; but we might conclude all the modern European states to be, in part at least, Heathen, from their medals. Had the Greeks and Romans been guilty of the same extravagance, we should not have found half the uses of their medals that we now do. It is impossible to learn from the French medals, either the religion, the customs, or the habits, of the French nation.

With



With regard to *taste* in medals, the moderns, attending principally to their historical uses, have crowded them too much with inscriptions; sometimes for want of room, putting a part of the legend upon the external edge of the piece; whereas the inscriptions upon most ancient medals are extremely concise, and elegant. We even find entire copies of verses on some modern medals, and on others so absurd and extravagant a taste is shown, that the year of our Lord is distinguished by the letters in the inscription which denote it being raised above the rest. Lastly, which is very remarkable, considering the great improvement of the arts in general; many of the ancient medals, as was hinted before, particularly those of the kings of Macedon, are said by the connoisseurs to exceed any thing of modern date in the beauty of their workmanship, and the delicacy of expression. During the time of the early Roman Emperors, the medals had a more beautiful *relief* than the modern. But about the time of Constantine they became quite flat, as those of all European states, which imitated them, likewise were, till of late years. We likewise copied the Constantino-

politan coinage in England till about the reign of Henry VII. in drawing a full face; whereas all faces were drawn in profile (which is, on many accounts, far the most proper for a coin) till the end of the third century.

Considering the principal historical uses of medals, without entering into all the fanciful views of a *virtuoso*, intent upon completing his several suites, it will appear no paradox that the *value* of a medal is not to be estimated either from the size, or the materials of it; but from what is curious in the head, the reverse, or the legend of it; from its rarity, from the fineness of its workmanship, or from the goodness of its preservation. Thus an Otho in silver is common and cheap; but an Otho in bronze is very scarce, and bears an immense price.

In modern times *coats of arms* have been made use of to distinguish families. They must therefore be of great use in tracing pedigrees, and consequently in ascertaining persons and events in history.

The origin of armories seem to be ascribed with the greatest probability to the ancient tournaments. Henry the Fowler, who regulated the tournaments in Germany, was  
the

the first who introduced these marks of honour. Coats of arms were then a kind of livery, composed of several bars, filets, and colours, to distinguish the combatants, whose features could not be seen during the engagement. And those who had not been concerned in any tournaments had no arms, though they were gentlemen.

Such of the nobility and gentry as crossed the sea, in the expedition to the holy land, also assumed these tokens of honour, to distinguish themselves.

Before those times we find nothing upon ancient tombs but crosses, with gothic inscriptions, and representations of the persons deceased. The tomb of pope Clement IV. who died in one thousand two hundred and sixty-eight, is the first whereon we find any *arms*; nor do they appear on any coin struck before the year one thousand three hundred and thirty-six. We meet with figures, it is true, much more ancient, both in standards and on medals; but neither princes nor cities ever had arms in form, nor does any author make mention of *blazoning* before that time.

Originally, none but the nobility had the right of bearing arms. But Charles V. king

of France, having ennobled the Parisians, by his charter, in one thousand three hundred and seventy-one, permitted them to bear arms. From their example, the most eminent citizens of other places did the like.

Camden says the use of arms was not established till the reign of Henry III. and he instances in several of the most considerable families in England; whereas till that time the son always bore arms different from those of the father. About the same time it became the custom in England for private gentlemen to bear arms, borrowing them from the lords of whom they held in fee, or to whom they were the most devoted.

Arms at present are of the nature of *titles*, being both alike *hereditary*, and the marks for distinguishing families and kindred, as names are of persons and individuals.

All the methods of transmitting the knowledge of events to posterity which have hitherto been mentioned, being more simple, and requiring less ability, would probably precede *histories*, or narratives written upon light and portable materials; though these, no doubt, would be very short, plain, and devoid of ornament at first. The traces of  
facts

facts left by the practice of preceding methods must also have been the only sources from which the first historians could derive their materials for the histories of times past. And since all nations, and all arts, approach to perfection by degrees, it is probable that traditional poems and monuments, with or without inscriptions, &c. would abound in those countries which produced the first historians.

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## LECTURE VII.

*The Transition from public Monuments to written Histories. Records and Archives of States. At what Time Chronology began to be attended to. Early Methods of noting the Intervals of Time. At what Time the History of this western Part of the World begins to be credible. Ancient Historians to be preferred, who write of the Events of their own Times. Modern History best understood a considerable Time after the Events.*

THE transition from public monuments to written histories may easily be conceived to

have been gradual, and almost insensible. For the first writings, or records in an historical form, were not the work of private persons, who wrote either for their own reputation, or the service of the public; but were made under the direction of some public magistrate; and, like the Capitoline tables, contained little more than a catalogue of the chief magistrates, and the bare mention of the principal events which happened under their administration. Such, probably, were the records of the archons of Athens, the catalogue of the priestesses of Juno Argiva, and not much more, probably, were the chronicles of the kings of Judah, Israel and Persia, of which mention is made in the Scriptures.

Few attempts were made by private persons to compose history in the Greek language (in which the oldest writings now extant, except those of the Old Testament, are contained) before Herodotus, who is therefore stiled *the father of history*, and who wrote about four hundred and fifty years before Christ. History never contained any variety of interesting and curious particulars, nor received any of those graces and ornaments, which render the study of it *liberal*, and en-  
gaging



gaging to the persons not concerned in the transactions it records, till men of literature and leisure gave their time and abilities to the subject.

As but *few* transactions could be transmitted by all the methods in use for recording them before the writing of history, and as historians themselves afford no sufficient dates for measuring the intervals of past time without *chronology*; it will be useful, in order to form a general idea about what time the bulk of history begins to be worthy of credit, to give some account of the time when history began to be written, and chronology to be attended to, in some countries of principal note. In this I shall chiefly follow sir Isaac Newton.

The Europeans had no chronology before the time of the Persian empire, and whatever chronology they now have of more ancient times has been framed since, by reasoning and conjecture. What they call *the historical age* wants a good chronology for sixty or seventy olympiads, and from such wandering people as were formerly in Europe, there could be no memory of things done three or four generations before the use of letters.

Cadmus

Cadmus Mileſius, and Acufilaus, the oldeſt hiſtorians among the Greeks, Joſephus ſays, were but a little before the expedition of the Perſians againſt Greece. Hellanicus was twelve years older than Herodotus, and digeſted his hiſtory by *ages*, or the ſucceſſion of the prieſteſſes of Juno Argiva. Others digeſted theirs by the archons of Athens, or the kings of Lacedæmon. Herodotus himſelf uſes no particular æra. Thucydides makes uſe of the commencement of the Peloponneſian war, which is the ſubject of his hiſtory, as an æra to which he refers all the events he mentions. Ephorus, who brought his hiſtory to the twentieth year of Philip of Macedon, digeſted things by *generations*. The reckoning by *olympiads*, or any other fixed æra, was not yet in uſe among the Greeks. The Arundelian marbles were compoſed ſixty years after the death of Alexander the Great, and yet mention not the olympiads, nor any other ſtanding æra, but reckon backward from the time then preſent. In the next olympiad, Timæus Siculus wrote a hiſtory down to his own times, according to the olympiads. Eratoſthenes wrote about one hundred years after the death of Alexander the Great, and  
was

was followed by Apollodorus ; and these two have been followed by all chronologers.

As Cambyfes destroyed all the records of Egypt, fuch as they were, we have no account of that people which can be depended upon before their intercourfe with the Greeks, from whom, indeed, is derived all that we know of them, and that was not before the time of Pſammeticus, who began his reign in the year fix hundred and fixty-one before Chriſt. This we learn from Herodotus, who, when he is ſpeaking of thoſe Grecians who had helped to ſet Pſammeticus on the throne of Egypt, ſays that the Ionians and Carians continued for a long time to inhabit thoſe parts which lay near the ſea, below the city of Bubaffis, in the Peluſiac branch of the Nile, till in ſucceeding times Amafiſ king of Egypt cauſed them to abandon their habitations, and ſettle at Memphis, to defend him againſt the Egyptians. But from the time of their eſta- bliſhment, he ſays, they had ſo conſtant a communication with the Greeks, that one may juſtly ſay we know all things that paſſed in Egypt from the reign of Pſammeticus to our age.

The chronology of the Latins is ſtill more uncertain

uncertain than that of the Greeks. Both Plutarch and Servius represent great uncertainty in the originals of Rome; and no wonder, considering that the old records of the Latins were burned by the Gauls, one hundred and twenty-six years after the Regifuge, and one hundred and sixty years before the death of Alexander the Great. Quintus Fabius Pictor, the oldest historian of the Latins, lived one hundred years later than Alexander, and took almost every thing from Diocles Peparethus, a Greek.

When the Greeks and Latins were forming their technical chronology, there were great disputes about the antiquity of Rome. The Greeks made it much older than the Olympiads. Some of them said it was built by Æneas; others by Romus, the son or grandson of Æneas; others by a Romus, the son or grandson of Latinus, king of the Aborigines; others by Romus the son of Ulysses, or of Ascanius, or of Italus; and some of the Latins at first fell in with the opinion of the Greeks, saying that it was built by Romulus, the son, or grandson, of Æneas. Timæus Siculus represents it as built by Romulus the grandson of Æneas, above one hundred years  
before

before the Olympiads, and so did Nævius the poet, who was twenty years older than Ennius; served in the first Punic war, and wrote a history of that war. Hitherto nothing certain was agreed upon; but about a hundred and forty, or one hundred and fifty years after the death of Alexander the Great, they began to say that Rome was built a second time by Romulus, in the fifteenth age after the destruction of Troy, meaning by *ages*, the reigns of the kings of the Latins at Alba\*.

Scythia beyond the Danube had no letters before Ulphilas their bishop introduced them, six hundred years after the death of Alexander; and the Germans had none till they received them from the western empire of the Latins, about seven hundred years after the death of that king. The Huns had none in the days of Procopius, who flourished eight hundred and fifty years after the death of that king, and Sweden and Norway received them still later†.

With regard to our own country, the Romans are the first nation from whom we learn any account of ourselves, and we had no wri-

\* Newton's Chron. p. 125.

† Ibidem, p. 50.

ters of our own till the planting of christianity, in the time of the Saxon heptarchy. But from this time the church and the cloisters furnished a constant succession till the reformation; after which, and the revival of letters in the rest, there can be no complaint of want of writers, of any kind, or party. And as to the bulk of modern history in general, and indeed a great part of what is now called ancient too; lord Bolingbroke justly observes, that since ancient memorials have been so critically examined, and modern memorials have been so multiplied, it contains such a probable series of events, easily distinguishable from improbable, as forces the assent of every man who is in his senses, and is sufficient to answer all the purposes of the study of history.

It may not be amiss to close this account of *historians* properly so called, with observing, that, of ancient historians, a contemporary writer is to be preferred; but that among the moderns, a later writer is almost universally preferable. The ancients we credit in proportion to the merit of their *evidence* for what they relate. The moderns we chiefly regard according to their accuracy and dili-



gence in comparing and ascertaining the evidence they can collect from others. The difference is founded on this consideration, that for want of memorials of ancient transactions, the more time has elapsed after they happened, the more dubious the history grows. Whereas in modern times, every event of consequence is instantly committed to writing, in some form or other, by a thousand hands. These are brought to light only by degrees; and considering that no person, or those immediately connected with him, can know the whole of any very complex transaction, and moreover that no person who writes the history of his own times can escape the influence of prejudice, for or against particular persons and schemes; a later writer, who views things with more coolness, and has a greater variety of materials to compare, has certainly a great advantage over any that went before him.

Our own history till the reformation, there can be no doubt, is far better understood this century than it was the last; and every year brings us acquainted with some new memoir concerning the transactions of the middle of that, and the beginning of the present century.

century. Nay, so much weight is due to this consideration, that we hardly need scruple to say, notwithstanding the loss of many valuable histories, that we have almost as perfect a knowledge of the most important events of several periods even in the classical history as the generality of the Greeks and Romans who lived in those periods could attain to. However, with regard to modern times, a contemporary writer, were he entirely free from prejudice, writes under great disadvantages, in point of *intelligence* only, in comparison with one who comes after him; who, with inferior qualifications, will easily be able to supply his deficiencies, if not correct his mistakes. And it can only be with respect to times in which there is a great scarcity of materials, and where those have been transmitted through the hands of several dependent evidences, that a contrary rule is to be observed.

## LECTURE VIII.

*Of the indirect Methods of collecting the Knowledge of past Events. The Use of Books not properly historical. The Works of Poets, and Orators, and the Remains of Artists of all Kinds. Difficulty of a Writer's concealing his Age and Country from a sagacious Reader. The Fictions of Annius Viterbo. The historical Use of Cicero's Letters. Several Instances of Newton's Sagacity in tracing Events by Means of connected Circumstances. Use of Language to an Historian, in tracing Revolutions in a State. How far any Circumstances in the Language of a Country may be a Guide in judging of the original Genius and Manners of the People; exemplified in the Hebrew and Roman Tongues. A curious Observation of Mr. Hume's on the Use of correlative Terms in Languages. Of Simplicity or Refinement in Languages.*

THE methods of recording events which have hitherto been mentioned may be termed *direct*, because they were contrived, and made use of, for that purpose; and the no-

tices of past events with which they furnish us are the most copious source of History in after ages. But there is a variety of other methods in which the knowledge of events, and of the situation of things in times past, is communicated to us *indirectly*; as from many circumstances, which do not at all partake of the nature of *records*, persons of sagacity and attention will be able to form an idea of the state of things, and to distinguish the intervals of time, in past ages. I shall mention a few of these, in order to give you some idea what a variety of things an accurate historian must attend to, and from what unexpected quarters he may sometimes receive the greatest light and information.

In the first place, it will easily be apprehended, that in order to form a complete idea of characters and events which occur in any period of history, we are not to confine ourselves to books professedly historical. For so extensive is the connexion of things with one another, that every thing written or done, in any period of time, is necessarily related, in a thousand ways, to many other things that were transacted at the same time; and therefore cannot help bearing some marks and traces of those related particulars; and by these a  
person

person of sagacity will be led to the knowledge of more things than he who transmitted the accounts of them intended to signify. For this reason, to form as complete an idea as possible of the state of things in any period of past time, we must carefully study all the remains of that time, how foreign soever they may at first sight appear to be to our main purpose. In this sense, even poets and orators may be considered as historians, and every law and custom as a piece of history.

To so great perfection are men arrived in distinguishing things that have any real connexion, that the age of almost every writing that remains of ancient times is determined with great exactness. Indeed, a writer who has no particular design to conceal the time in which he writes, can hardly avoid introducing (in one manner or other) the mention of such particulars as will direct to it; or if he intend to impose upon the world, it is a thousand to one but, if nothing else, his *language* and *style* betray him. These are things which are perfectly mechanical, and least of all at a person's command; or, however, what few persons ever think of disguising.

There is no doubt, in particular, but that

all the pieces which *Annius* of *Viterbo* endeavoured to palm upon the world as ancient writings have been exposed; the innumerable fabulous legends about our Saviour, the apostles, and many of the popish saints, which long passed current, are now no longer regarded; and the famous *Decretals*, of which the popes availed themselves so much in dark ages, are now acknowledged to be forgeries, even by the catholics themselves; while the real productions of antiquity stand their ground the firmer from these critical examinations; and all the arguments of pere Harduin (who from seeing numberless forgeries was led to suspect forgery every where) has not probably been able to make one genuine classic author suspected.

A few examples will more clearly show what use an attentive historian may make of books not properly historical. No historian now extant, or probably that ever was extant, will give a person so much insight into the real characters, and views, of those great men who distinguished themselves in the time of Cicero, as he may get from that collection of letters between Cicero and his friends, which pass under his name, and particularly from his  
correspondence



correspondence with Atticus. These letters, indeed, are written with so few interruptions, and with so much freedom, that they contain a pretty regular, and very faithful history of the most active and critical part of his life. They show us, at least, in what light Cicero himself, who was a principal actor in that important period, viewed the characters and events of his time. And private *diaries*, and letters, written by persons who were the chief actors on the theatre of European politics in the last century, are daily coming to light, and supplying great defects in all our historians.

Sir Isaac Newton, from two passages in the poems of Theognis of Megara, collects both the age of that writer and the situation of the Greeks in his time. That poet exhorts his companions to be unanimous, and to drink and be merry, without fear of the Medes; and he says that Magnesia, Colophon, and Smyrna, Grecian cities of Asia Minor, were destroyed by discord. From these circumstances he infers that, in the time of this author, Cyrus had conquered those cities of the Greeks in Asia, that the states of Greece in Europe were under great apprehension of

being invaded, and that the Persians had not then assumed the superiority over the Medes, which they afterwards did.

The *language* of a people is a great guide to an historian, both in tracing their origin, and in discovering the state of many other important circumstances relating to them. Of all customs and habits, that of *speech*, being the most frequently exercised, is the most confirmed, and least liable to change. Colonies, therefore, will always speak the language of their mother country, unless some event produce a freer intercourse with people who speak another language; and even the proportion of that foreign intercourse may in some measure be estimated by the *degree* of the corruption of the language. A few facts will clearly explain these positions.

The considerable change which the Hebrew language underwent at the time of the Babylonish captivity would be sufficient to inform us without the aid of any other circumstance, that few of the old inhabitants remained in the country, and that those who were carried away captive were either much separated from one another, or did not return in great numbers. The few and inconsiderable remains

mains of the British language in the present English demonstrates, beyond all contradiction, the havock that was made of the Britons by our Saxon ancestors, amounting almost to a total extirpation and expulsion. And the Saxon language spoken in the lowlands of Scotland is a greater proof that they were sometime or other conquered by the Saxons, than the imperfect and fabulous annals of the Scotch historians are of the contrary.

But the use of language to an historian is by no means confined to discover the origin of a nation, or the greater revolutions that have befallen it. Language takes a tincture from the civil policy, the manners, customs, employment, and taste, of the nation that uses it, by means of which a person well versed in the theory of language will be able to make many curious discoveries. An example or two will make this observation also pretty plain.

It has been observed that the frequent allusions to military affairs, or concealed metaphors borrowed from the art or practice of war in the common forms of speech in the Roman tongue (such as *intervallum*, a term signifying *distance* simply, though borrowed

from fortification) and many others of the like nature, clearly inform us that the Romans were a people originally addicted to war. Like traces of a pastoral life, and the business of husbandry, are found in the Hebrew language, which is therefore equally characteristic of the genius and manner of life of that people. And if we only consider that all people must be under the greatest necessity of inventing terms to express the ideas of things about which they are the most early and the most frequently conversant, and that these terms, preferably to others, are universally transferred to things analogous to them (because most allusions will necessarily be made to things of the most frequent occurrence) this method of tracing the original genius, manners, and employment of a nation, subtle as it may at first sight appear, will easily be perceived to have a foundation in nature; and we may see that, were a language thoroughly examined in this view, many clear and unquestionable conclusions of this kind might be drawn from it.

It is observable that the word in the Hebrew which signifies a *stranger*, is derived from another word which signifies to *fear*,  
and

and that *hostis* in Latin originally signified both a *stranger* and an *enemy*. Are not both these circumstances plain indications that, in the times when those languages were formed, there was little intercourse between different nations, and that travelling was very hazardous?

From the following curious observation on the nature and progress of language, Mr. Hume, with great ingenuity, and appearance of reason, argues that population was little encouraged by the Romans among their slaves. In all languages, when two related parts of *a whole* bear any sensible proportion to each other, in numbers, rank, or consideration, there are always *correlative terms* invented, which answer to both of the parts, and express their mutual relation; whereas if they bear no sensible proportion to each other, a name is invented for the less only, and no particular term is thought of to distinguish the more considerable part from the other. Thus *man* and *woman*, *master* and *servant*, *prince* and *subject*, *stranger* and *citizen*, are correlative terms in all languages, indicating that each part signified by them bears a considerable proportion to the other, that both

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are



are frequently mentioned in opposition to one another, and are often compared together. But *verna*, the Latin name for a *slave born in the family*, has no correlative; which clearly indicates that that species of slaves bore no sensible proportion to the rest, and would not bear to be compared with them.

By the same method of reasoning, we infer that the military part of ancient Rome bore a greater proportion to the husbandmen than they do among us, because with them the terms *miles* and *paganus* were correlative; and that the *priests* of Rome were never considered as a part of the community distinct from the rest, because there is not in Latin any term to denote the *laity*, in opposition to the *clergy*, as there is in all christian countries.

It may just be mentioned in this place, that copiousness and refinement in language always keep pace with improvements in the arts and conveniencies of life, and with the progress of science in a country. Discoveries of other kinds, made by the medium of language might be mentioned, but these are sufficient to show of what importance the study of language may be to a person who would get a thorough insight into the history, the genius, and the manners of a people.



## LECTURE IX.

*Connexion of History and Law. The state of paternal and filial Affection among the Romans, as seen by the Tenor of the Civil Law. Customs and general Maxims of the same Use as Laws. Use of Laws in tracing the original Genius and Manner of Life of a People. Change in Laws corresponding with a Change of Manners, exemplified in the feudal System in England. Simplicity or intricacy of Law. Hale's Inferences from a Law of Canute's.*

THE laws of a country are necessarily connected with every thing belonging to the people of it; so that a thorough knowledge of *them*, and of their progress, would inform us of every thing that was most useful to be known about them; and one of the greatest imperfections of historians in general is owing to their ignorance of law. Indeed hardly any person, except a native, can come at an intimate knowledge of the laws of any country. But it is greatly to be lamented that things so nearly connected as *law* and *history* should have been so seldom joined. For  
though

though the history of battles and state intrigues be more engaging to the bulk of readers, who have no relish for any thing but what interests the *passions*; from the knowledge of the progress of laws, and changes of constitution, in a state, a politician may derive more useful information, and a philosopher more rational entertainment, than from any other object he can attend to. I shall mention a few particulars, by way of illustration of what I have now advanced.

As every new law is made to remove some inconvenience the state was subject to before the making of it, and for which no other method of redress was effectual, the law itself is a standing, and the most authentic, evidence we can require of the state of things previous to it. Indeed, from the time that laws began to be written in some regular form, the preamble to each of them is often an historical account of the evil intended to be remedied by it, as is the case with many of our statutes. But a sagacious historian has little occasion for any preamble to laws. They speak sufficiently plain of themselves.

When we read that a law was made by Clothaire king of France, that no person should

should be condemned without being heard, do we need being told that before the time of the enacting that law the administration of justice was very irregular in that country, and that a man could have little security for his liberty, property, or life? Is it not a proof that the spirit of hospitality began to decline among the Burgundians as they grew more civilized, when there was occasion for a law to punish any Burgundian who should show a stranger to the house of a Roman, instead of entertaining him himself?

It is but an unfavourable idea that we form of the state of paternal and filial affection among the Romans, from the tenor of their laws, which show an extreme anxiety to restrain parents from doing injustice to their own children. Children (say their laws) are not to be disinherited without just cause, chiefly that of ingratitude; the cause must be set forth in the testament; it must be tried by the judge, and verified by witnesses, if denied. Whereas among other nations natural affection, without the aid of law, is a sufficient motive with parents to do no injustice to their children. A knowledge of another part of the political constitution of the Romans will

will probably help us to a reason for the uncommon defect of natural affection among them. The *patria potestas* was in reality the power of a master over a slave, the very knowledge, and idea, of which, though it were not often exercised, was enough to produce severity in parents, and fear and diffidence in children, which must destroy mutual confidence and affection.

Customs, and general maxims of conduct, being of the nature of unwritten laws, give us the same insight into the state of things in a country. The high esteem in which hospitality is held by the Arabs, and the religious, and even superstitious practice of it by them, and by other savage nations, shows the great want there is of that virtue in those countries, and that travelling is particularly dangerous in them.

The laws and customs of a country show clearly what was the manner of living and the occupation of the original inhabitants of it. Thus where we find that the eldest sons succeed to the whole, or the greatest part of the estate, we may be sure that we see traces of feudal notions, of a military life, and a monarchical government, in which a prince is better served  
by

by one powerful vassal than by several weak ones. Where the children succeed equally, it is a mark of a state having been addicted to husbandry, and inclined to a popular equal government. And where the youngest succeeds, we may take it for granted that the people formerly lived a pastoral and roving life, in which it is natural for the oldest to be provided for, and disposed of, the first, and the youngest to take what is left; a manner of life which requires, and admits of, little or no regular government.

The change of manners, and way of living, may be traced in the changes of the laws. Thus the change from a military to a commercial state may be traced in England by the progress of our laws, particularly those relating to the alienation of landed property; a thing absolutely inconsistent with strict feudal notions, and for a long time impracticable in this country; but which took place by degrees, as the interests of commerce were perceived to require, that every thing valuable should circulate as freely as possible in a state. It must, however, be considered, that the change of laws does not keep an equal pace with the change of manners, but follows



lows sometimes far behind. In almost every case, the reason and necessity of the thing first introduces a change in the *practice*, before the authority of *law* confirms and authorizes it. This too is easy to be traced in many of our English laws, and particularly those which relate to the easy transferring of landed property, for the purpose of trade and commerce.

Without entering into particular laws, we may observe of the state of laws in general, as was observed with regard to language, that copiousness and refinement in them, and even intricacy and tediousness in the administration of them, is an indication of freedom, and of improvements in civilized life; and that few laws, and an expeditious administration, are marks either of the connexions of persons being very few, and little involved (which is a necessary consequence of improvements), that the rights of persons have not been attended to, and that the nation is but little advanced in the knowledge or possession of those things on which their happiness and security chiefly depend; or that too arbitrary a power is lodged in some hands or other; it being well observed by Montesquieu, that the tediousness  
and



and expence of law-suits is the price of liberty. It is very possible, however, that both the laws of a country, and the administration of them, may be rendered much less complex than they are with us, without any diminution of general liberty; and but little benefit can accrue from laws, when it is either impossible to know what they are, or when the expence of having recourse to them is greater than can be afforded.

To make you sensible with what attention laws should be considered, and how many distinct circumstances a person of sagacity may learn from them; I shall quote the observations which lord chief justice Hale makes upon a law of king Canute, which is as follows in Lambard's collection: *Sive quis incuria, sive morte repentina fuerit intestato mortuus, dominus tamen nullam rerum suarum partem, preter eam quæ jure debetur hereoti nomine, sibi assumito; verum eas, judicio suo, uxori, liberis, et cognationi proximis jussu, pro suo cuique jure, distribuito.* “ If any person dying by accident, or suddenly, shall be intestate, let  
“ not the lord take any part of his goods,  
“ except what may be due to him as a *heriot*;  
“ but let him, using his best judgment, dis-  
VOL. I. M “ tribute

“tribute them to his wife, children, and  
“nearest relations, according to their respec-  
“tive claims.”

Upon this he observes five things, 1. That in those times the wife had a share as well of the lands, as of the goods for her dower; 2. That, in reference to hereditary successions, there seemed to be little difference between lands and goods; for this law makes no distinction; 3. That there was a kind of settled right of succession with reference to proximity and remoteness of blood or kin; 4. That with respect to children, they all seemed to succeed alike without any distinction between males and females; 5. That the ancestor, however, might dispose of his lands, as well as goods, by will.

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## LECTURE X.

*The Use of Observations on the Intervals between the Generations of Men and Successions of Kings, to ascertain the Dates of past Events. The Antiquity of these Methods of noticing Intervals of Time. Fallacious Method of computing*

*computing by them. Easy Correction of that Fallacy; by which Newton has amended the Chronology of ancient Kingdoms and Nations. The Interval between the Return of the Heraclidæ and the Battle of Thermopylæ determined by Successions: The same Interval ascertained by Generations. The Time of the Argonautic Expedition determined by two Courses of Generation. Extravagance of the Greek Chronology. Improbable Circumstances in the commonly received Chronology of Rome. The Time of the Siege of Troy comes to be the same, computing by Successions in Italy, and by Successions and Generations in Greece; and is agreeable to what Appian writes from the Archives of Carthage.*

MANY observations on the common course of human life will enable us to determine the intervals of time within which events connected with them have happened. Those of which the most use has been made are observations on *generations of men*, and *successions of kings*. For instance, when we read in history, or collect from circumstances, that a certain number of generations intervened between any two events, or that a certain num-

ber of kings reigned in the interval, we shall be able to fix the date of the former with respect to the latter, if we have carefully observed (from comparing a sufficient number of facts) what has been the mean length of a generation, and the mean length of a reign; or at what age men taken, one with another, have had children, and how long kings, in general, have actually reigned.

The use of these mediums of proof has been acknowledged from the earliest writing of history; and, indeed, so obvious is the thought, that the chronology of all the ancient times of the Grecian history was adjusted by their oldest writers upon these principles alone. The misfortune is, that they took their mean length of a *generation*, and also that of a *succession*, from mere random and fanciful conjectures, and not from a careful observation of facts. But it is happy that, though these writers have fixed the chronology of ancient times by a fallacious theory, a sufficient number of the *facts*, to which their theory ought to have corresponded, still remains; by means of which it is easy to reform their theory, and rectify their chronology. Indeed, it is a happy circumstance, that

that every theory drawn from the situation of things in *human life*, is always open to confutation or correction, while the course of human life remains the same. It is but observing how things really are, and whether the theory in question actually correspond to it, or not.

It is upon these principles chiefly that sir Isaac Newton has undertaken to rectify the chronology of ancient states and kingdoms; and for examples to these observations, I shall lay before you the evidence on which his admirable theory rests. In order to this, I shall state the principal of those facts the chronology of which has been so variously represented; showing how incompatible with the course of nature are the dates that have formerly been assigned to them, and which passed without examination till the time of this great author, and upon what principles he has reduced their extravagant chronology within the bounds of nature and probability.

In order to have a clearer idea of the connexion of his proofs, I must observe that the great events, the intervals of which he endeavours to ascertain, succeeded each other in the following order :

The Argonautic expedition.

The siege of Troy.

The return of the Heraclidæ into Peloponnesus.

The first Messenian war.

The expedition of Xerxes.

The Peloponnesian war.

Between the return of the Heraclidæ into Peloponnesus and the battle of Thermopylæ (of the time of which there is no controversy) there reigned, of one race, the following kings of Lacedæmon, Euristhenes, Agis, Echestratus, Labotas, Doriagus, Agefilaus, Archelaus, Teleclus, Alchimenes, Polidorus, Euricrates, Anaxander, Euricratides, Leon, Anaxandrides, Cleomenes, and Leonidas, seventeen in all, and along with these was a succession of seventeen also in the other race. In this interval, therefore, we have a double succession of seventeen kings. Now, by comparing the chronology of almost all the successions which have been perfectly ascertained, sir Isaac Newton finds that kings have reigned one with another eighteen or twenty years apiece ; and if in any case they have exceeded that number of years, it was not in such unsettled



settled times as were those of the Grecian monarchies.

The seventeen princes, therefore, according to this computation, allowing them twenty years apiece, which is quite as much as the nature of things will admit of, must have reigned three hundred and forty years. These, counted backwards from the sixth year of Xerxes, and allowing one or two years more for the war of the Heraclidæ, and the reign of Aristodemus, the father of Euristhenes and Proclus, will place the return of the Heraclidæ into Peloponnesus one hundred and fifty-nine years after the death of Solomon, and forty-six before the first Olympiad in which Choræbus was victor. But Timæus and his followers have taken the reigns of kings for generations, and reckoned three generations at one hundred, and sometimes one hundred and twenty years; and so have assigned thirty-five or forty years to each king, and accordingly have placed the return of the Heraclidæ two hundred and eighty years earlier than the nature of things can possibly admit.

Other facts, with which we are furnished by these very chronologers, and other ancient

writers, enable us to confirm the truth of the preceding interval of time by a different medium of proof. If we consider the course of descent in a sufficient number of families, we shall find that the interval from father to son, is, one with another, thirty-three or thirty-four years apiece, and that the intervals between the eldest sons and chiefs of families (such as are most taken notice of by historians) are not more than twenty-eight or thirty years, one with another.

The reason why a longer interval is assigned to *generations of men* than to *successions of kings*, is because kings are succeeded not only by their sons, but sometimes by their brothers; and sometimes they are slain or deposed, and are succeeded by others of an equal age, or even a greater age than themselves, and especially in elective or turbulent kingdoms.

Admitting the above to be the mean length of generations, if we multiply the number of generations which intervened between any two events by thirty-three or thirty-four, for generations in general, and by twenty-eight or thirty for generations by the eldest sons, we shall probably determine the interval with tolerable

tolerable exactness: and when conclusions from this method of computation coincide with those from the other by successions of kings, they cannot but be allowed to confirm one another. This we are able to do with respect to the greater part of the preceding interval.

From the return of the Heraclidæ to the beginning of the first Messenian war, there reigned ten kings of Sparta in one race, nine in the other, ten of Messene, and nine of Arcadia. These successions, if reduced to the course of nature, in the method directed above, will scarce take up one hundred and eighty, or one hundred and ninety years; whereas according to chronologers in general, they took up a space of three hundred and seventy-nine years. But that one hundred and eighty, or one hundred and ninety years, is the most probable interval, appears by an argument drawn from a course of generations during the very same period.

Euryleon the son of Æugeus commanded the main body of the Messenians, in the fifth year of the first Messenian war, and he was in the fifth generation from Oioloclus the son of Theras, brother-in-law of Aristodemus,  
and

and tutor to his sons Euristhenes and Proclus, as Pausanias relates. Consequently from the return of the Heraclidæ, which was in the days of Theras, to the battle, which was in the fifth year of this war, there were six generations, which being, (as is most probable) chiefly by the eldest sons, will scarce exceed thirty years to a generation, and so may amount to one hundred and seventy, or one hundred and eighty years. That war lasted nineteen or twenty years, of which add the last fifteen years to the five mentioned before, and there will be about one hundred and ninety years to the end of that war; the very length of the same interval, as determined by the preceding observations on the successions of kings. But the followers of Timæus, by making this interval about three hundred and seventy-nine years, must allow above sixty years to a generation, which can by no means be supposed.

To illustrate more at large the method of arguing from generations, and at the same time to proceed a little farther in giving the outlines of this author's great reformation in ancient chronology, I shall relate two other courses of generations, which fix the time of  
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the Argonautic expedition, an event, which is the grand hinge on which all the chronology of ancient Greece turns, and the date of which, as determined by generations, you will presently see confirmed by another method of investigation on very different principles.

One of these courses of generations extends backwards from the return of the Heraclidæ, where our last course began, to the expedition, and the other from the Peloponnesian war to the same event. Hercules the Argonaut was the father of Hillus, the father of Cleodeus, the father of Aristomachus, the father of Temenus, Cresphontes, and Aristodemus, who led the Heraclidæ into Peloponnesus; whence their return was four generations later than the Argonautic expedition; and these generations were short ones, being by the chief of the family. Count therefore eighty years backward, from the return of the Heraclidæ to the Trojan war, and the taking of Troy will be about seventy-six years after the death of Solomon; and the Argonautic expedition, which was one generation earlier, will be about forty-three years after it.

*Æsculapius*



Æsculapius and Hercules were Argonauts, and Hippocrates was the eighteenth inclusively, by the father's side, from Æsculapius, and the nineteenth from Hercules by the mother's side; and because these generations, being taken notice of by writers, were most probably by the principal of the family, and so for the most part by the eldest sons, we may reckon about twenty-eight, or at the most about thirty years to a generation; and thus the seventeen intervals by the father's side, and the eighteen by the mother's, at a middle reckoning, amount to above five hundred and seven years; which, counted backwards from the beginning of the Peloponnesian war, at which time Hippocrates began to flourish, will reach up to the forty-third year after the death of Solomon, and there place the Argonautic expedition; the very year in which we were led to place it by following the former course of generations.

The same great author ascertains this, and several other capital events in the Grecian history, by such a variety of independent arguments, drawn from the same and different mediums, all so agreeable to the present course of nature, that it seems impossible for a person



who pays a sufficient regard to it not to be determined by them. It is surprising, indeed, that the manifest inconsistencies of the commonly received chronology with the course of nature should not have prevented the establishment of it; and it is absolutely unaccountable, but upon the willingness of all men, to admit of any hypothesis which tends to give dignity to their nations and families, by adding to the antiquity of them. But must it not be a more unaccountable attachment to established hypotheses which can induce any persons of the present age, after these inconsistencies have been so clearly pointed out, still to adhere to a chronology, which, in those turbulent unsettled times, supposes kings to have reigned one with another in some successions thirty-five, in some thirty-eight, in some forty, in some forty-two, in some forty-four, and in some forty-six years a-piece; and which generally allows about sixty years to a generation, and in one instance eighty-five?

With respect to the chronology of the kings of Rome, Mr. Hooke has shown by several independent arguments, drawn from the connexion of events in the history of their reigns,

reigns, that to suppose them to have reigned one with another nineteen or twenty years makes a more consistent series of facts, than to imagine them to have reigned thirty-five years apiece, which is the common hypothesis.

The chief inconveniences attending the old chronology in the Roman history are, that it supposes an interval of sixty-three years of peace in that restless nation before the accession of Tullus Hostilius. It makes the reign of Servius Tullius so long in proportion to the few censuses, which (according to the most authentic records) were taken in his reign, as would argue a most unaccountable neglect of his own favourite institution. It obliges us to suppose Tarquinius Superbus not to have been the son of Tarquinius Priscus, Dido not to have been contemporary with Æneas, or Numa with Pythagoras, as well as Solon with Croesus in the Grecian history; all which have the unanimous voice of all tradition in their favour, and which Dionysius Halicarnassensis, Livy, and Plutarch, express their extreme unwillingness to give up, but that they were compelled to it by a regard to a chronology which in their times was unquestioned. Indeed,

deed, the congress of Solon and Cræsus Plutarch expresses his determination not to give up, notwithstanding his general attachment to a theory which would not admit of it, and the fallacy of which he did not suspect. His words are so remarkable, and show so clearly on how precarious a footing that chronology stands, that I shall recite them, “ The congress of Solon with Cræsus some think they “ can confute by chronology. But a history “ so illustrious, verified by so many witnesses, “ and, which is more, so agreeable to the “ manner of Solon, and worthy of the greatness of his mind and of his wisdom, I cannot persuade myself to reject because of “ some chronological canons, as they call “ them; which an hundred authors correcting, have not been able to constitute any “ thing certain, and have not been able to “ agree amongst themselves about repugnances.”

Besides, to return to the Roman history; if the number of kings that reigned at Alba be joined to those who reigned at Rome, and they be allowed to have reigned nineteen or twenty years apiece, they will place the coming of Æneas into Italy, and the siege of  
Troy,

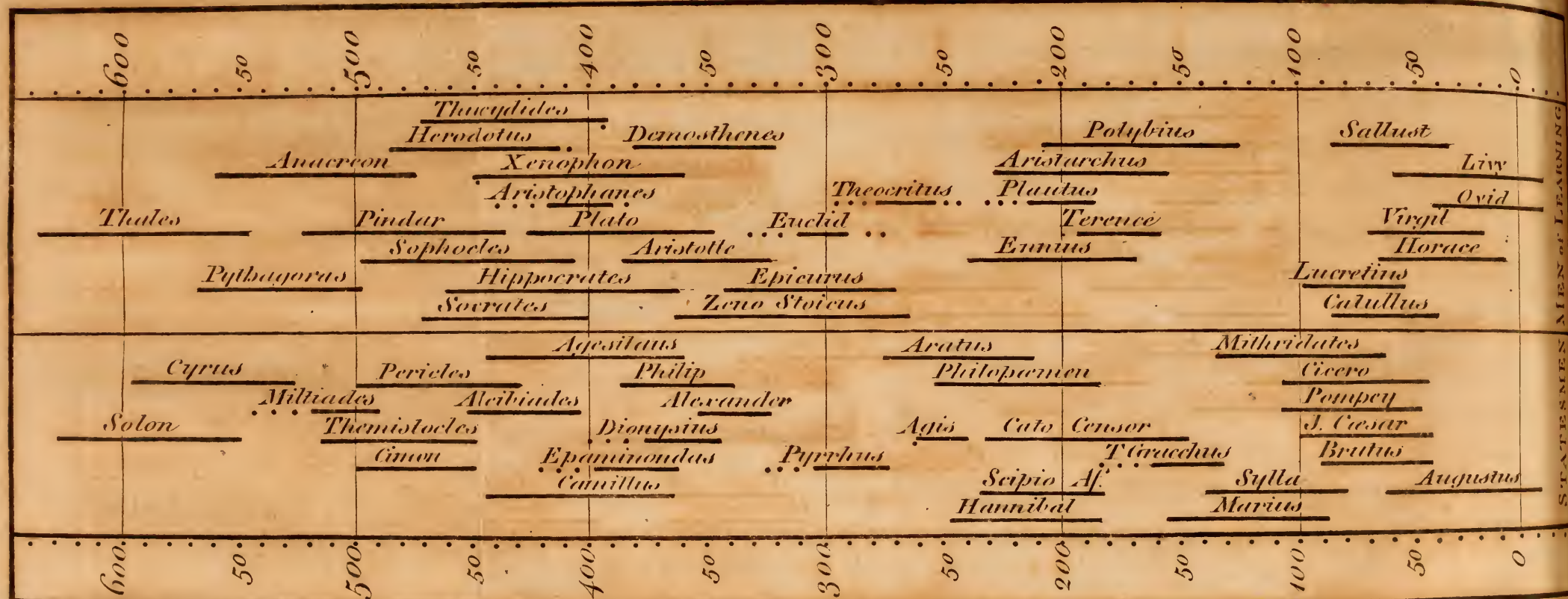
Troy, exactly in the time in which arguments drawn from generations and successions in Greece, as well as astronomical calculations (as will hereafter appear) place that event, which is a reciprocal confirmation of the just correction both of the Greek and Latin chronology. For from Latinus to Numitor are sixteen kings, who reigned at Alba; Romulus was contemporary with Numitor, and after him Dionysius and other historians reckon six kings more at Rome to the beginning of the consuls. Now these twenty-two reigns, at about eighteen years to a reign one with another (for many of these kings were slain), took up three hundred and ninety-six years, which counted back from the consulship of J. Brutus and Valerius Poplicola, the two first consuls, place the Trojan war seventy-eight years after the death of Solomon.

This computation likewise agrees with what Appian in his history of the Punic wars relates, out of the archives of Carthage, which came into the hands of the Romans, viz. that Carthage stood seven hundred years. This is a round number, but Solinus adds the odd years when he says, Carthago post annos 737 quam fuerat extructa exciditur, which places  
Dido,





# A Specimen of a Chart of Biography.





Dido, the founder of Carthage, about seventy-six years after the death of Solomon. It likewise agrees with the Arundelian Marbles, which say that Teucer came to Cyprus seven years after the destruction of Troy, and built Salamis, in the days of Dido. Indeed, it is an argument greatly in favour of Newton's computations, that they agree very nearly with all the most ancient *monuments*, the most current *traditions* of antiquity, and the *oldest historians*; particularly Herodotus and Thucydides, who wrote before chronology was corrupted by the vanity of their nation, or the absurd systems of later historians.

It is an argument greatly in favour of the credibility of the Old Testament history, that the courses of generations and descents which are mentioned in it, parallel to those in the fabulous period of the Grecian history, fall within the same intervals of time with those which have been measured since history has been authentic. Consequently, it is another argument in favour of Newton's correction of the ancient Greek chronology, that it brings the courses of generations and successions in the one to correspond to those in the other. Besides, in several other respects

it brings them to a greater harmony than can be made out upon any other principles. Particularly it places the expedition of Sesostris (who as it is highly probable from several circumstances, was the same person with Sefac) in the very time in which it is spoken of in the scriptures.

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## LECTURE XI.

*The Time of past Events ascertained by Means of celestial Appearances. The certainty of the Method of Computation by Eclipses. A few ancient Eclipses enumerated. The Use of them exemplified in the Calculation of an ancient Eclipse of the Moon.*

OF all the incidental circumstances by which ancient writers enable us, in an *indirect* manner, to ascertain the time of events, none give occasion to more clear and undeniable conclusions than the mention they make of *celestial appearances*, on account of the regularity and constancy of the revolutions of  
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the heavenly bodies, and because the laws of their motions are so exactly known to us. In this respect much are modern chronologers and historians obliged to the superstition with which the ancients regarded unusual appearances in the heavens. It was their imagined portentous nature that first drew upon them the attention of mankind, who dreaded their unknown influences and effects. It was on this account, and not because they were considered as proper subjects of philosophical inquiry, or of any use in chronology, that they have engaged the notice of historians. And fortunately for us, the catalogue of ancient eclipses, not observed by philosophers, but gazed at by the superstitious vulgar, is pretty full. Along with the history of many remarkable revolutions, and critical situations in the history of states, the eclipses which preceded, or accompanied them, are faithfully transmitted to us; and where the time, the place, and quantity of an eclipse are mentioned, though not with astronomical exactness, it is very easy, by the rules of calculation, to fix the very year and day when the event happened. For considering the prodigious variety which the three circumstances of *time*, *place*,

and *quantity* occasion in the appearance of eclipses, there is no room to suspect that any two, happening within a moderate distance of one another, can be in the least danger of being confounded.

For the entertainment of those who take pleasure in calculations of this kind, I shall just quote, from Mr. Ferguson's astronomy, some of the principle eclipses that have been taken notice of by historians, that you may verify them at your leisure.

Before Christ 585 May 28, an eclipse of the sun, foretold by Thales, by which a peace was brought about between the Medes and the Lydians.

B. C. 523 July 16, an eclipse of the moon, which was followed by the death of Cambyfes.

B. C. 481 April 19, an eclipse of the sun, on the sailing of Xerxes from Sardis.

B. C. 463, an eclipse of the sun followed by the Persian war, and the falling off of the Egyptians from the Persians.

B. C. 431 August 31, a total eclipse of the sun, and a comet; followed by a plague at Athens.

B. C. 413 August 27, a total eclipse of  
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the moon, when Nicias was defeated at Syracuse.

B. C. 394 August 14, an eclipse of the sun, when the Persians were beaten by Conon in a sea engagement.

B. C. 168 June 21, a total eclipse of the moon, and the next day Perseus king of Macedonia was conquered by Paulus Æmilius.

After Christ 59 April 30, an eclipse of the sun, reckoned by Nero among the prodigies on account of the death of Agrippina.

A. C. 306 July 27, an eclipse of the sun; the stars were seen and the emperor Constantius died.

A. C. 840 May 4, a great eclipse of the sun, and Lewis the Pious died within six months after it.

A. C. 1009 an eclipse of the sun, and Jerusalem taken by the Saracens.

To exemplify the use of eclipses for the purposes of chronology, I shall select from the above mentioned, one of the moon, and show how the date of the event which accompanied it is ascertained by the help of it.

The eclipse of the moon, which I shall select, and the circumstances attending it are thus related by Thucydides, L. 7. sect. 50.



Upon the arrival of Gylippus to the assistance of the Syracusans, the Athenians, finding they were no match for the united force of their enemies, repented that they had not quitted their situation (in which it was no longer safe for them to continue) before, and immediately came to a resolution to sail out of the harbour as secretly as possible. But when every thing was ready for sailing the moon was eclipsed, for it was then full moon. Upon this, most of the Athenians, alarmed at the omen, desired their commanders to proceed no farther; and Nicias, being himself a superstitious observer of such prodigies, declared that he would not come to any final resolution about quitting the place till they had staid three days longer, according to the advice of the soothsayers. This occasioned the Athenians to stay in the place, which they had never after an opportunity of leaving, and in which they almost to a man perished.

This event is placed by historians in the year B. C. 413, and upon looking into the astronomical tables, it appears that she was at the full about midnight at London, or one o'clock in the morning at Syracuse on the



27th of August in that year; when the sun was only four degrees forty-eight minutes from the node, far within twelve degrees the limit of Lunar eclipses; and when, consequently, there must have been a total eclipse of the moon, which would be visible to the Athenians from the beginning to the end of it, and may therefore reasonably be supposed to have produced the effect ascribed to it by the historian.

A history which contains an account of a sufficient number of these phænomena furnishes us with the surest test of its authenticity. Almost all the credit which is given to the Chinese history is derived from this consideration. The eclipses there mentioned to have happened, astronomers say, did really happen at the times assigned to them\*.

The theory of comets is not sufficiently ascertained to enable us to make much use of their revolutions for historical purposes; nor indeed are there any events they accompanied, which we cannot determine much more nearly by other mediums of proof, than, it is

\* I made this lecture a short one, because I used to produce in the course of it calculations of several past eclipses, to illustrate the principles of it.

probable, we could have done by the help of comets, were their theory ever so well ascertained. Their returns are, probably, not sufficiently regular, nor, if they were, are the accounts of them in historians sufficiently exact for that purpose.

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## LECTURE XII.

*Of the Use which Newton has made of Observations on the Precession of the Equinoxes in rectifying ancient Chronology. The Time of the Argonautic Expedition determined by that Means. The Date of several subsequent Events determined by the same Means, in perfect Consistence with one another. A Conjecture concerning the Age of an old Sphere in the Museum of the Farnesian Palace. The Age of Hesiod determined pretty nearly from his Account of the heliacal rising and setting of some Stars. The Use of the Books of the Old Testament for rectifying the Heathen Chronology. The Use it was of to Newton in particular.*

THE

THE calculations of eclipses are of great use in ascertaining particular events, if they have been previously determined within a moderate distance; but the grand astronomical medium which sir Isaac Newton has so successfully employed in rectifying the whole system of ancient chronology, is the *precession of the equinoxes*. The quantity of this precession is known, by a series of the most accurate observations, to be one degree backwards in seventy-two years; that is, the sun crosses the ecliptic so much more to the west every year, that at the end of seventy-two years his progress westward amounts to one degree, whereby the places of the equinoxes are continually receding from the constellations, in the middle of which they were originally placed. Whenever, therefore, the situation of the equinoctial or solstitial points, or any appearance depending upon them, is mentioned, it is easy to ascertain the time of any event with which such an appearance was connected. It is done by observing how many degrees the equinoctial points have receded from the situation they then had to that which they have at present, and allowing seventy-two years to every degree.

That

That the constellations were first invented at the time of the Argonautic expedition, is pretty evident from a variety of considerations. We have not only the testimony of several ancient writers for the fact, but the constellations themselves seem very plainly to declare as much. For the old constellations mentioned by Aratus, do all of them relate either to the Argonauts themselves, and their contemporaries, or to persons one or two generations older; and nothing later than that expedition was delineated there originally. It is, therefore, very probable (as several ancient writers assert) that the first sphere was invented by Chiron and Musæus for the use of the Argonauts.

We have, moreover, the testimony of several ancient writers that the equinoctial and solstitial points in this old sphere were placed upon the middle of the constellations that give names to them; namely, that the equinoctial colure was made to pass through the middle of the constellation Aries, and the solstitial colure through the middle of Cancer. Besides, the reason of the thing might reasonably lead us to imagine, that the ancients would place the equinoxes and solstices as  
nearly

nearly in the midst of their respective constellations as their coarse observations would enable them to determine. For since the first month of their lunar-solar year, by reason of their intercalary month, began sometimes a week or a fortnight before the equinox or solstice, and sometimes as much after it, the first astronomers, who formed the asterisms, would naturally endeavour to place those grand divisions of the year, the equinoxes and solstices, as nearly as they could in the middle of the constellations Aries, Cancer, Chelæ, and Capricorn.

Admitting the colures to have passed through the middle of those constellations at the time of the Argonautic expedition, sir Isaac Newton finds that the equinoctial and solstitial points had gone back thirty-six degrees forty-four minutes at the end of the year one thousand six hundred and eighty-nine; which, allowing seventy-two years to each degree, would have been accomplished in the space of two thousand six hundred and forty-five years. This number, counted back from the year one thousand six hundred and eighty-nine, will place the Argonautic expedition about twenty-five years after the death of Solomon.

This

This computation proceeds upon the supposition that the middle of the constellation is exactly the middle point between the two stars called *prima Arietis*, and *ultima Caudæ*, but if we fix the cardinal points by the stars through which the colures passed in the primitive sphere, as described by Eudoxus, which seems to be better, the equinoctial points will have receded thirty-six degrees twenty-nine minutes, which answers to two thousand six hundred and twenty-seven years, and places the expedition forty-three years after the death of Solomon, very near the same year to which it was referred by the other preceding, and very different, methods of computation; the very near and remarkable coincidence of which is the greatest confirmation of the certainty of both those methods of investigation.

What gives great weight to this argument from the precession of the equinoxes is, that if we reckon from whatever time the position of the equinoctial points hath been mentioned by astronomers whose age is known, this motion, counted backwards, fixes that great event in the same year. It likewise demonstrates that the observations of the ancients, though coarse enough, as sir Isaac acknowledges,



ledges, are sufficiently exact for the purpose. As this circumstance is pretty remarkable, I shall mention the particulars of it.

According to Pliny, and the calculations of Petavius; Thales, who wrote a book of the tropics and equinoxes, fixed the equinoxes and solstices in the eleventh degree of their respective signs; so that they had receded four degrees twenty-six minutes and fifty-two seconds, from their original place at the time of the Argonautic expedition. This answers to three hundred and twenty years, and calculated backwards from the forty-first Olympiad (when Thales was a young man, fit to apply to astronomical studies) will place that event forty-four years after the death of Solomon.

According to Columella, Meton, and Euctemon, who published the lunar Cycle of nineteen years, and for this purpose observed the summer solstice in the year of Nabonassar three hundred and sixteen, the year before the Peloponnesian war began, placed the summer solstice in the eighth degree of Cancer, which is at least seven degrees more backwards than at first. This space answers to five hundred and four years, which, counted backwards

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from

from the year of observation, makes the expedition fall upon the forty-fourth year after the death of Solomon.

Lastly, Hipparchus, who first discovered that the equinoxes had a regular motion backwards, made his observations about the year of Nabonassar six hundred and two, and fixed the vernal equinox in the fourth degree of Aries. Consequently, the equinoctial points had gone back eleven degrees since the Argonautic expedition, which is equivalent to seven hundred and ninety-two years, and which counted backwards places the expedition in the forty-third year after the death of Solomon.

These four coincidences are remarkable, and could not have placed the same event so near the same year, unless all the observations had been sufficiently exact. And when we consider the coincidences of a great many more independent evidences, derived from the course of generation, and the order of succession, with those which are borrowed from astronomical principles, nothing seems to be better established, than that the Argonautic expedition, an event on which all the Greek chronology depends, really happened about  
forty-

forty-three years after the death of Solomon, and not in the days of Gideon, above three hundred years before, as has been the common opinion.

It may be observed in this place, that the error of Hipparchus with respect to the quantity of the precession, is a proof that the chronology of Greece before his time was erroneous, and wanted correction. He makes it to be one degree in about one hundred years, which he was necessarily led to conclude from the lengthening of the intervals of observation by the received chronology; and therefore the discovery that the precession of the equinoxes is only at the rate of seventy-two years to a degree, furnishes us with a good reason why we ought to shorten the time before Hipparchus in about the same proportion.

By arguments drawn from the rate of the precession of the equinoxes we can nearly determine the age of an *old globe* found in the ruins of ancient Rome, and which is now preserved in the museum of the Farnesian palace, as one of the most curious monuments of antiquity. On this globe the equinoctial colure passes through the right horn and right  
foot

foot of Aries, and is about five degrees distant from the equinoctial point laid down on the globe. From these circumstances it will appear, that this globe was made about forty years before Christ; and it is moreover probable, from the construction of this globe, that the colure passed through the bright star of Aries about four hundred years before Christ.

The rising and setting of the stars with respect to the rising and setting of the sun depends also upon the precession of the equinoxes. Any writer, therefore, who mentions the rising or setting of any star, at any particular time of the year, with respect to the sun, furnishes us with data sufficient to determine the time in which he wrote. Thus Hesiod tells us that sixty days after the winter solstice the star arcturus rose just at sun set; from which circumstance it is easily calculated that Hesiod flourished about one hundred years after the death of Solomon, or in the generation, or age, next to the Trojan war, as Hesiod himself declares; which is another independent argument for the date before assigned to that war, and all the Greek chronology connected with it.

Many

Many other circumstances which Hesiod occasionally mentions, relating to the state of the heavens in his time, concur in leading us to the same conclusion. Virgil too, if his age had not been ascertained in another manner, has given us data of the same kind sufficient to determine it pretty nearly.

I cannot conclude these observations on the chronology of the earliest ages of the heathen world better than by reminding you, that, the truth of the scripture history being unquestionable, and relating to times prior to the age in which history began to be written by any other people than the Jews, it is the best guide to the knowledge of profane antiquity. It was in pursuing this plan that Newton was led to correct the ancient technical chronology of the Greeks by itself. The principles on which he reduces their accounts are founded on nature, and independent on any arguments drawn from scripture. But it is more than probable that, seeing reason to think, from similar circumstances, that Sesostris must have been the same person with Sefac, of whom we have an account in the history of Rehoboam, he first of all fixed the date of that expedition

dition according to the scriptures, and that afterwards, from considering the subject in various points of light, he was led to the other arguments which have been mentioned; by which he was able to confirm the scriptural date of that event, and also the dates of the principal facts in the history of Greece connected with it, in a manner independent of the authorities on which he first founded his opinion. Then having, by the joint helps of scripture and reason, rectified the chronology of the Greeks, he made use of this rectified chronology to adjust the contemporary affairs of the Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Medes, and Persians.

If this analysis of the method of reasoning, so successfully used by sir Isaac Newton in rectifying the chronology of ancient times, induce any of you who are intended for a learned profession to study so excellent and important a work, and be any help to you in understanding it, and I shall thus contribute to the more general reception of the great outlines of this system, I shall think that I have rendered an important service to the learned world.



## PART III.

WHAT IS NECESSARY, OR USEFUL, TO BE  
KNOWN PREVIOUS TO THE STUDY OF  
HISTORY.

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## LECTURE XIII.

*Use of the Sciences derived from History to the  
Study of History. The Knowledge of human  
Nature. Philosophical Knowledge in gene-  
ral. Geography. Chronology. The Me-  
thod of reckoning by Weeks. Division of  
the Day.*

BEFORE we enter upon the third division of our subject, which comprizes what is necessary, or peculiarly useful, to be known previous to the study of history, it is proper to observe, that it must be taken in very different degrees of extent, according to the views with which history is read; and that this, as was observed before, depends very much upon the age and situation of the person who applies to it.

If particular portions of history be recommended to young persons, with a view to amuse their imaginations, to engage their passions, to discover their dispositions and genius, or form them to just and manly sentiments, in order to fit them for acting in the common spheres of life with more propriety and dignity, no previous qualifications at all are necessary. Let youth have history put into their hands as soon as they are capable of reading, provided that passages be selected with a view to their age and capacity. The uses above-mentioned (which after all, are the noblest that can be made of history) may be derived from it though many particular passages in historians be unintelligible, and the reader be not capable of applying history to those purposes of science, to which it has been shown to be subservient.

But if a person have farther and scientific views in the study of history, he will find several branches of knowledge, and some articles of previous information, extremely useful, and in a manner necessary. It is true that those sciences, and those articles of information, were originally derived from history; and therefore that those who first ap-  
plied

plied to the study of it had not these helps. But the same may be said of grammars, which were made after the persons who wrote them had formed an acquaintance with the languages which they were designed to explain; but which are universally esteemed to be, in a manner, necessary to be understood by any person who would obtain, at least an easy and speedy acquaintance with these languages afterwards. I shall therefore, in this part of my subject, point out those branches of science, and give the principal of those articles of information, which are peculiarly useful to a person who applies to the study of history. And, indeed, if a person have no thought of establishing or confirming any principles of science by his study of history, it must greatly contribute to his pleasure in reading, to understand his author perfectly, and have a clear idea of every thing which is presented to him in the theatre he is viewing.

Considering the extensive nature of history, there is no branch of science which it may not be of advantage for a person to furnish himself with, preparatory to the study of it. But it must be observed that an accurate and extensive knowledge of those sciences cannot

be attained without some knowledge of history. Indeed their aid is mutual, just as the knowledge of grammar, as was observed before, qualifies a person for the reading of authors, and the reading of authors enlarges and perfects his acquaintance with grammar. There is no occasion therefore for a person who proposes to study history scientifically to defer his application to it till he be completely master of the sciences I shall recommend, as peculiarly useful to his purpose. If he come to the reading of history furnished with the first principles of them, he will find his knowledge of them grow more perfect as he proceeds; particularly if he attend to the facts he becomes acquainted with, with that view.

For instance, the knowledge of *human nature* is of universal and constant use in considering the characters and actions of *men*; yet a very moderate knowledge of this important subject is the result of all our reading, of all our experience, and of all the observations we can make upon mankind. A general idea, however, of the principles of human nature will be an excellent guide to us in judging of the consistency of human characters, and of what is within, and what without, the reach of  
human

human powers; and without some attention to this subject we might embrace all the fables of *Grecian mythology*, and all the extravagancies of books of *chivalry*, as undoubted truth; or admit it to be possible, that the real heroes of antiquity might have been the same persons with those who bore their names in the most absurd of the modern plays and romances which are founded on their history.

*Philosophical knowledge* in general is of the most extensive use to all persons who would examine with accuracy the achievements of ancient nations in peace or war, or who would thoroughly weigh the accounts of any thing in which the powers of nature are employed. Without some acquaintance with philosophy it will be impossible to distinguish between the most absurd chimeras of eastern romance, and the most natural historical relations. Who but a philosopher, or a person acquainted with the powers of nature and art, could form any judgment of what the ancients relate concerning the prodigious machines of *Archimedes* in the defence of *Syracuse*; or know what to think of the accounts of omens, oracles, and prodigies, which occur

in such grave historians as Livy, Tacitus, Josephus, &c.?

Without some knowledge of philosophy a person might even admit what many authors have related one after another, that the famous Otho, archbishop of Mayence, was besieged and devoured by an army of rats in the year six hundred and ninety-eight, that Gascony was deluged with showers of blood in one thousand and seventeen, or that two armies of serpents fought a battle near Tournay in one thousand and fifty-nine. It particularly requires a considerable acquaintance with several branches of philosophy, to distinguish between truth and falsehood, probability and improbability, in the history of the customs and manners of ancient and remote nations.

*Astronomy*, though seemingly very remote from this subject of civil history, has been shown, in a preceding lecture, to instruct us in the business of chronological calculations; and *mathematical science* in general is usefully applied in measuring the greatness, and consequently in determining the probability, of many human works.

But



But those sciences which are of the most constant and general use to an historian, so as to have deserved to be called the *two eyes of history*, are *geography* and *chronology*. Without geography, or a knowledge of the situation and relative magnitude of the several countries of the earth, no reader of history can have any clear and distinct idea of what he reads, as being transacted in them. Besides, he would be liable to the grossest impositions, and might even be led to think, for instance, from the common editions of Shakspeare, that ships might come to an harbour in Bohemia. Moreover, by a knowledge of geography we are able to verify many past transactions, which, if they ever happened, must have left indelible traces upon the face of the earth. Many curious examples of this nature may be seen in Addison's, Maundrell's, and Shaw's travels. The fissure in the rock of Mount Calvary, which was made when our Saviour was crucified, and a large fragment of the rock of Rephidim near mount Sinai, are remarkable facts of this nature.

This science of geography, being perfectly distinct from history, civil or ecclesiastical, though absolutely necessary to the knowledge  
of

of it, I shall not enter upon; but *chronology*, the other eye of history, as it consists chiefly of a knowledge of the artificial divisions of time, and partakes more of the nature of history, I shall explain as briefly as possible; especially as much of the principles of it as I apprehend to be of the most use in the study of history.

The use of chronology (though it may have been sometimes handled too minutely for the purpose of history) cannot be denied. We can form but very confused notions of the intervals of time, of the rise and fall of empires, and of the successive establishment of states, without some such general comprehension, as we may call it, of the whole current of time, as may enable us to trace out distinctly the dependence of events, and distribute them into such periods and divisions, as shall lay the whole chain of past transactions in a just and orderly manner before us; and this is what chronology undertakes to assist us in.

The divisions of time which are considered in chronology relate either to the different methods of computing days, months, and years, or the remarkable æras or epochas from  
which

which any year receives its name, and by means of which the date of any event is fixed.

Time is commodiously divided by any equal motions, or the regular return of any appearances, in the heavens or on the earth, that strike the senses of all persons; and there are *three* of these, so particularly conspicuous, that they have been made use of for this purpose by all mankind. They are the changes of day and night, the course of the moon, and the return of the seasons of the year.

The first of these is produced by the revolution of the earth about its axis, and is called a *day*; the second is the period that elapses between one new moon and another, called a *month*; and the third is the time in which the earth completes its revolution about the sun, called a *year*.

Were these three periods commensurate to one another, that is, did a month consist of any equal number of days, and the year of a certain number of lunar months, a great part of the business of chronology would have been exceedingly easy. All the embarrassment of the ancient astronomers, in settling their periods, and all the difficulty that attends the acquiring

acquiring the knowlege of them, have been owing to the methods that mankind have been compelled to adopt in order to accommodate the three methods of computing time, viz. by days, months, and years, to one another, so as to make use of them all at the same time.

Beside these three natural divisions of time, there is another that may be called artificial, viz. into *weeks*, or periods of seven days, which took its rise from the Divine Being having completed the creation of the earth in seven days. But this division of time, though used by Jews, Christians, and Mahometans, and by almost all the people of Asia and Africa, was not observed by the Greeks or Romans.

To give as distinct a view of this subject as I am able, I shall first give some account of each of these divisions of time, noting all the principal sub-divisions or distributions that have been made of them, and then describe the methods of accommodating them to one another.

*Days* have been very differently terminated and divided by different people in different ages, which it is of some importance to a reader of history to be acquainted with. The  
ancient

ancient Babylonians, Persians, Syrians, and most other eastern nations, with the present inhabitants of the Balearic islands, the Greeks, &c., began their day with the sun's rising. The ancient Athenians and Jews, with the Austrians, Bohemians, Marcomanni, Silesians, modern Italians and Chinese, reckon from the sun's setting; the ancient Umbri and Arabians, with the modern astronomers, from noon; and the Egyptians and Romans, with the modern English, French, Dutch, Germans, Spaniards, and Portuguese, from midnight.

The Jews, Romans, and most other ancient nations, divided the day into twelve hours, and the night into four watches. But the custom which prevails in this western part of the world at present is, to divide the day into twenty-four equal portions, only with some the twenty-four are divided into twice twelve hours; whereas others, particularly the Italians, Bohemians, and Poles, count twenty-four hours without interruption.

## LECTURE XIV.

*Months, Lunar and Solar. Difference in Beginning the Year. Intercalation. Cycles. Old and new Style. The Solar Cycle. Cycle of Indiction. Julian Period. Æras or Epochas. The Æra of Nabonassar. Of the Seleucidæ. Of the Birth of Christ. Of the Hegira. Of the Æra used formerly in Spain. Of the Battle of Actium. Of the Æra of Dioclesian and that of Yesdejerd. Cautions in comparing them with one another.*

As a complete lunation consists of about twenty-nine days and an half, and the changes of the moon are very visible, there could be no great difficulty in accommodating them to each other, or in fixing what number of days should be allowed to a month. In general the ancients made them to consist of twenty-nine and thirty days alternately; and they could never make a mistake of a day without being able to rectify it (provided the view of the heavens was not obstructed) by ocular observation.

When



When months came to be reckoned not by lunations, but were considered as each the twelfth part of a year, consisting of three hundred and sixty-five days and some hours, it became necessary to allow sometimes thirty and sometimes thirty-one days to a month, as in the Roman calendar.

Whenever months are mentioned as divided by days in the books of scripture, they are supposed to consist of thirty days each ; and twelve months, or three hundred and sixty days, make the year. This is particularly to be observed in interpreting the prophetical books of Daniel and St. John.

Different people have made their years to begin at different times, and have used a variety of methods to give names to them, and distinguish them from one another.

The Jews began the year for civil purposes in the month of *Tizri*, which answers to our September ; but for ecclesiastical purposes with *Nisan*, which answers to our April, at which time they kept the passover.

The Athenians began the year with the month *Hecatombæon*, which began with the first new moon after the summer solstice.

The Romans had at first only *ten* months  
in

in their year, which ended with December, but Numa added January and February.

At present there are in Rome two ways of reckoning the year. One begins at Christmas on account of the nativity of our Saviour, and the notaries of Rome use this date, prefixing to their deeds *a nativitate*; and the other at March, on account of the incarnation of Christ, and therefore the pope's bulls are dated *anno incarnationis*.

The ancient French historians began the year at the death of St. Martin, who died in the year four hundred and one, or four hundred and two; and they did not begin in France to reckon the year from January till one thousand five hundred and sixty-four, by virtue of an ordinance of Charles IX. Before that time they began the day next after Easter, about the twenty-fifth of March.

In England also, till of late, we had two beginnings of the year, one in January, and the other on March 25; but by act of parliament in one thousand seven hundred and fifty-two, the first day in January was appointed to be the beginning of the year for all purposes.

Most of the eastern nations distinguish the  
year

year by the reigns of their princes. The Greeks also had no better method, giving names to them from the magistrates who presided in them, as in Athens from the archons. The Romans also named the year by the consuls. And it was a long time before any people thought of giving names to the years from any particular æra, or remarkable event. But at length the Greeks reckoned from the institution of the Olympic games, and the Romans from the building of Rome. They did not, however, begin to make these computations till the number of years that had elapsed since those events could not be computed with exactness, and therefore, they have greatly antedated them.

About A. D. 360, the Christians began to reckon the years from the birth of Christ, but not time enough to enable the chronologers of that age to fix the true time of that event.

The Greeks distributed their years into systems of *four*, calling them *Olympiads*, from the return of the Olympic games every four years. And the Romans sometimes reckoned by *Lustra*, or periods of five years. The word comes from *luo*, which Varro says signifies *to pay*, because every fifth year they paid a tri-

bute imposed by the cenſor, at the ſolemn purification inſtituted by Servius Tullius.

The greateſt difficulty in chronology has been to accommodate the two methods of computing time by the courſe of the moon and that of the ſun to each other; the neareſt diviſion of the year by months being twelve, and yet twelve lunar months falling eleven days ſhort of a complete year. This gave birth to many *cycles* in uſe among the ancients, the principal of which I ſhall explain.

It appears from the relation which Herodotus has given of the interview between Solon and Cræſus, that, in the time of Solon, and probably that of Herodotus alſo, it was the cuſtom with the Greeks to add, or, as it is termed, to *intercalate*, a month every other year; but as this was evidently too much, they probably rectified it, by omitting the intercalation whenever they obſerved, by comparing the ſeaſons of the year with their annual feſtivals, that they ought to do it. If, for inſtance, the firſt fruits of any kind were to be carried in proceſſion on any particular day of a month, they would ſee the neceſſity of intercalating a month, if, according to their uſual reckoning, thoſe fruits were not then  
ripe,

ripe, or they would omit the intercalation if they were ready. And had no other view interposed, their reckoning could never have erred far from the truth. But it being sometimes the interest of the chief magistrates to lengthen or shorten a year, for the purposes of ambition, every other consideration was often sacrificed to it, and the greatest confusion was introduced into their computations.

Finding themselves, therefore, under a necessity of having some certain rule of computation, they first pitched upon *four years*, in which they intercalated only one month. But this producing an error of fourteen days in the whole cycle, they invented the period of *eight years*, in which they intercalated three months, in which was an excess of only one day and fourteen hours, and therefore this cycle continued in use much longer than either of the preceding.

But the most perfect of these cycles was that which was called the *Metonic*, from Meton, an Athenian astronomer, who invented it. It consisted of nineteen years, in which seven months were intercalated. This brought the two methods to so near an agreement, that after the expiration of the period, not only

do the new and full moons return on the same day of the year, but very nearly on the same hour of the day.

This cycle was adopted by the christians at the council of Nice, for the purpose of settling the time for keeping Easter, and other moveable feasts. This period, however, falling short of nineteen years almost an hour and a half, it has come to pass, that the new and full moons in the heavens have anticipated the new and full moons in the calendar of the book of common prayer four days and an half. These last are called *Calendar new moons*, to distinguish them from the true new moons in the heavens.

It has not been without difficulty and variety, that the computation by *years* has been accommodated to that by *days*; since a year does not consist of any even number of days, but of three hundred and sixty-five days five minutes and forty-nine seconds.

It will appear from what has been observed, that so long as mankind computed chiefly by months, it was not of much consequence to determine with exactness the number of days in the year; and this method sufficiently answered every civil and religious purpose. But the  
Egyptians,



Egyptians, and other nations addicted to astronomy, were not satisfied with the method of computing by lunar months, the days of which varied so very much from one another in different years. They therefore made the *year* the standard, and dividing that into *days*, made use of *months* only as a commodious intermediate division, and, without regard to the course of the moon, distributed the days of the year into *twelve parts*, as nearly equal as they conveniently could. By this means the same day of the month would fall on the same part of the sun's annual revolution, and therefore would more exactly correspond to the seasons of the year. The Mexicans divided their year into eighteen parts.

The Egyptians, as also the Chaldeans and Assyrians, reckoned at first three hundred and sixty days to the year, but afterwards three hundred and sixty-five. The consequence of this was that the beginning of their year would go back through all the seasons, though slowly; namely, at the rate of about six hours every year. Of this form too were the years, which took their date from the reign of Nabonassar of Babylon, Yezdigerd of Persia, and the Seleucidæ of Syria.

It must be observed, however, that the people who reckoned their year from these epochas, namely, the Egyptians, Persians, and Jews; as also the Arabians, had a different and more fixed form of the year for astronomical purposes; but as no use was made of it in civil history, the account of it is omitted in this place.

The inconvenience attending the form of the year above mentioned was in a great measure remedied by the Romans, in the time of Julius Cæsar, who added one day every fourth year, which (from the place of its insertion, viz. after the sixth of the calends of March) was called *bissextile*, or leap year. This form of the year is still called the *Julian* year. But the true length of the year being not quite six hours more than the three hundred and sixty-five days, this allowance was too much; and pope Gregory XIII. introduced another amendment in the year one thousand five hundred and eighty-two, by ordering that once in one hundred and thirty-three years a day should be taken out of the calendar, in the following manner, viz. from the year one thousand six hundred every hundredth year (which according to the Julian form is always *bissextile*, or leap

leap year) was to be common, but every four hundredth year was to continue bissextile, as in the Julian account. As this pope made allowance at once for all the alteration that his method would have made in the course of the year from the time of the council of Nice, the *new style* (for so his regulation of the year is called) differed from the old style ten days at the very commencement of it, and is now eleven days different from it. The new style was adopted in England in one thousand seven hundred and fifty-two,

The Mahometans make their year to consist of lunar months only, without endeavouring to adapt it to the course of the sun; so that with them the beginning of the year goes through all the seasons at the rate of about eleven days every year.

But since the exact time of twelve moons, besides the three hundred and fifty-four whole days, is about eight hours, and forty-eight minutes, which make eleven days in thirty-six years, they are forced to add eleven days in thirty years, which they do by means of a cycle, invented by the Arabians, in which there are nineteen years with three hundred and fifty-four days only, and eleven interca-

lary of three hundred and fifty-five days, and they are those in which the number of hours and minutes more than the whole days in the year is found to be more than half a day, such as two, five, seven, ten, thirteen, sixteen, eighteen, twenty-one, twenty-four, twenty-six, and twenty-nine, by which means they fill up all the inequalities that can happen.

It has been of some consequence to christians to adjust the days of the week to the days of the month, and of the year, in order to get a rule for finding *Sunday*. Had there been no biffextile, it is evident that, since the year consists of fifty-two weeks, and one day, all the varieties would have been comprized in seven years. But the biffextile returning every fourth year, the series of *dominical letters* succeeding each other is interrupted, and does not return in order, but after four times seven years, or twenty-eight years, which is therefore commonly called the *solar cycle*, serving as a rule to find Sunday, and consequently all the days of the week of every month and year.

Besides the above mentioned periods of years, called *cycles*, there are some other combinations, or systems of years, that are of use

in chronology, as that called the *indiction*, which is a period of fifteen years, at the end of which a certain tribute was paid by the provinces of the Roman empire, and by which the emperors ordered public acts to be dated.

But the most remarkable of all the periods in chronology is that called the *Julian period*, invented by Joseph Scaliger, and called *Julian*, from the years of which it consists being Julian years. His object was to reduce to a certainty the different methods of computing time, and fixing the dates of events, by different chronologers. For this purpose nothing was necessary but a series of years some term of which was fixed (that, for instance, by which the present year should be denominated) comprehending the whole extent of time. Since, if each chronologer would apply that common measure to his particular scheme, they would all perfectly understand one another.

To accomplish this, he combined the three periods of the *sun*, the *moon*, and the *indiction*, together, that is, multiplying the numbers twenty-eight, nineteen, and fifteen into one another, which produces seven thousand nine hundred and eighty, after which period, and  
not



not before, all the three cycles will return in the same order every year, being distinguished by the same number of each.

In order to fix the beginning of this period, he took the cycles as he then found them settled in the Latin church; and tracing them backwards through their several combinations, he found that the year in which they would all begin together was the year before the creation seven hundred and fourteen, according to Usher, and that the first year of the christian æra would be four thousand seven hundred and fourteen of this period.

There is a farther convenience in this period, viz. that if any year be divided by the number composing the cycles, viz. twenty-eight, nineteen, or fifteen, the quotient will shew the number of the cycles that have elapsed since the commencement of it, and the remainder will give the year of the cycle, corresponding to the year given.

I cannot help observing that this boasted period seems to have been unnecessary for the chief purpose for which it was invented, viz. to serve as a common language for chronologers, and that now little use is made of it, notwithstanding all writers still speak of it in  
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the same magnificent terms. The vulgar christian æra answers the same purpose as effectually.

All that can be necessary for chronologers to speak the same language, and be perfectly understood by one another, and by all mankind, is to give every year the same name or designation, which is most conveniently done by expressing them in a series of numbers in arithmetical progression, any one term of which they shall agree to affix to the same year, a year in which any well known event happened. Let it, for example, be that in which the peace of Paris was made, and let it be called one thousand seven hundred and sixty-three. If, besides this, it be only agreed in what part of the revolution of the sun, or in what month and day, the year begins, there can be no difficulty in giving a name to every other year preceding or following it, and thereby ascertaining the interval between all transactions. For all the events that took place the year before that peace will be referred to the year one thousand seven hundred and sixty-two, and all in the year after it to one thousand seven hundred and sixty-four. This period having had a commencement since  
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the date of history is no inconvenience; for whenever we have gone back to number *one* of this period, the year preceding it may be called *one before its commencement*, the year preceding that *two* before it, &c. and thus proceeding *ad infinitum* both ways.

That Christ might not have been born in the first of that system of years to which it serves to give a name, is no inconvenience whatever; since, whatever differences of opinion there may be among chronologers about the time when Christ was born, they all agree in calling the present year, and consequently every other year, by the same name, and therefore they have the same idea of the interval between the present year and any other year in the system. The real time of Christ's birth can no more affect the proper use of this system than that of any other indifferent event; since, using the same *system of dates*, they may say Christ was born in the third, fourth, fifth, sixth, or, what I think to be the case, in the seventh year before the christian æra.

Whenever, therefore, chronologers ceased to date events from the *creation*, which was very absurd (since they did not agree in fixing the  
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the interval between the present year and the date of that event, and therefore gave all the years different names) they had no occasion to have recourse to any such period as the Julian; since another, capable of answering the same purposes, was already in common use, supplying them with a language which they all equally understood.

Æras or Epochas, are memorable events from which time is reckoned, and from which any subsequent year receives its denomination. The Greeks for a long time (as I observed before) had no fixed æra, afterwards they reckoned by Olympiads, which were games celebrated in honour of Jupiter once in four years, and began in Midsummer, seven hundred and seventy-six years before Christ. The Athenians gave names to their years from their archons. The Romans called their years from the names of the consuls who presided in them, and afterwards they dated events from the building of their city, supposing it to have been built seven hundred and fifty-three years before Christ.

Some histories are regulated by the year of Nabonasiar, who began his reign in the year seven hundred and forty-seven before Christ,  
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of the Julian period three thousand eight hundred and sixty-seven. It is supposed to have commenced on the twenty-sixth of February in the afternoon.

The Jews before Christ reckoned by the year of the Seleucidæ, sometimes called the year of the contracts, which began in the year three hundred and twelve before Christ, of the Julian period four thousand four hundred and two, some time in the spring.

The Christians, about three hundred and sixty years after the birth of Christ, began to make use of that æra, which is now used in all christian countries.

The Mahometans reckon their years from the flight of Mahommed from Mecca. This æra is called the Hegyra. It began in the year six hundred and twenty-two after Christ, of the Julian period five thousand three hundred and thirty-five, on the sixteenth of July.

The old Spanish æra is dated from the year thirty-eight before Christ, about the time when they were subdued by the Romans. It was used till the year one thousand three hundred and thirty-three, under John I. of Castile.

The Egyptians long reckoned from the bat-

tle of Actium, which happened in the year thirty-one before Christ, of the Julian period four thousand six hundred and eighty-three, on the third of September.

Before the Christian æra was used, the Christians for some time made use of the Dioclesian æra, which took its rise from the persecution by Dioclesian, in the year two hundred and eighty-four after Christ.

The æra of Yefdigerd is dated from the last king of Persia, who was conquered by the Saracens, in the year six hundred and thirty-two after Christ, of the Julian period five thousand three hundred and forty-five, on the sixteenth of June.

With regard to all these methods of denominating time, care must be taken that the year be reckoned according to the method of computation followed by the people who use it. Thus, in reckoning from the Hegyra, a person would be led into a mistake who should make those years correspond to Julian years. He must deduct eleven days from every year which has elapsed since the commencement of it. Thus, though the first year of this æra corresponded to the year six hundred and twenty-two after Christ, and  
began

began on the sixteenth of July; the year three hundred and twenty-six of the Hegyra corresponded to the year nine hundred and thirty-seven of Christ, and began November eight. And the year of the Hegyra six hundred and fifty-five commenced on the nineteenth of January, one thousand two hundred and fifty-seven.

This compendium of chronology is sufficient for the purpose of reading history, but is by no means a complete account of the methods of computing time in every particular country which has been mentioned. To have done this, would have carried me beyond my present purpose, and too far into the customs of particular countries. For a fuller account I refer you to Strauchius, and other chronologers.

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## LECTURE XV.

*Of the Methods of estimating the Riches and Power of ancient and remote Nations. Sources of Mistake on this Subject. Change in the Standard of Coin. Upon what the Price of Commodities*



*Commodities depends. Of the Changes which the Grecian Coins underwent. Of the Proportion between Silver, Gold, and Copper, in ancient Times. Of the Changes in the Roman Coins. Of the Proportion of Money to Commodities in different Periods of the Grecian and Roman History. Of the Interest of Money in Greece and at Rome.*

AN article of information the most immediately necessary to a reader of history, is how to make a just estimate of the riches and power of ancient and remote nations, and to compare them with those of our own age and nation, by means of the expressions which historians have used to denote the riches and power of states, and particularly by the sums of money which are occasionally mentioned in their writings. The true state of the riches of nations, in the several periods of their history, will be pointed out as an object of the first importance to an historian. On this account it is of consequence that every reader of history have it in his power to form a just idea of them from the *data* he finds in historians, and that he be guarded against the mistakes which, without some previous in-

struction, he would unavoidably fall into with respect to them.

I shall therefore endeavour to explain the sources of uncertainty, and ambiguity, that every circumstance in our situation can occasion to us, in interpreting the sums of money which are mentioned in the histories of the most considerable nations, and I shall then give such a collection of *facts*, collected from history, as shall show us the true state of every thing connected with money in the most remarkable successive periods of time in those countries. By this means it will be easy to make every necessary allowance for the difference of circumstances between us and them, and thus exhibit whatever accounts we meet with of the riches and power of ancient times and nations, in a fair contrast with the riches and power of our own age and nation, and so to form the clearest idea we can get of them.

In order to this, it must be considered, that *money* is only a commodious representative of the *commodities* which may be purchased with it; and we shall have the easiest view of this subject if we, moreover, consider *silver* as the only standard of money, and gold and copper, as substitutes for silver, or as commodities  
which

which are represented, and may be purchased, by silver. Now, there are two things which may make an alteration in the representative power of money. The one is a change of the idea annexed to any common name of a piece, or a sum of money, and the other is an alteration of the proportion between the quantity of money in a state, and the commodities represented by it. I shall explain each of these more particularly.

If a change be made in the standard of a coin, which continues to go by the same name, it is plain that the same name no longer expresses the same idea, and therefore, if we be not aware of this change, we shall be misled by the expressions. For instance, if the quantity of silver which we call *a pound* be at this time but half the quantity which was formerly called by that name, it is plain that, if we would form a just idea of the value of a pound in times previous to the alteration we must suppose it to be two of our present pounds, instead of one; for so in fact it is.

The tables of our coin only show the proportion which sums denoted by particular names, as pounds, shillings, pence, &c. bear to one another; and though these sums may

have always kept the same proportion, the absolute value of them all may have changed. And *tables*, which show the value of ancient or foreign money, are always calculated according to the last standard of both, which is generally the lowest. The present tables, therefore, are not sufficient to inform a reader of history of the true value of sums of money expended, or acquired, in early times. He must also have an historical account of those changes in the value of coin, which alter the quantity of metal contained in it, either by diminishing the size of the current pieces, or lessening the fineness of the metal by a greater proportion of alloy.

As the generality of historians take no notice of changes in the value of money, but content themselves with mentioning sums by their common names, I shall endeavour (as far as the materials I have been able to collect will enable me) to supply this defect with respect to those histories which are most interesting to us.

As it is a maxim in trade, that *every thing will find its value* (and indeed the value which the exchange of any thing, in buying and selling, has is its real value, that is, its true  
relative

relative value with respect to other things) the accounts of sums exchanged for commodities in history are the only *data* we have given us, to determine this relative value of money; and if we have enow of these accounts, they will be abundantly sufficient for the purpose.

To judge of the proportion between the quantity of circulating cash in different nations, or different periods of the same nation, it is evident that we must not be guided by the price of any single article, particularly an article of luxury; because the prices of these things depend upon fancy and caprice, which are continually changing. The best guide upon the whole seems to be the price of mere *labour*, estimated by the wages given to persons of the lowest occupations. For these have been observed, in all ages and nations, to be little more than a bare subsistence, and the articles of *their* expence must be the *necessaries* of life.

Besides, it is self-evident, that the man who can command the most of the labour of his fellow creatures is the richest, and the most powerful. For this, in fact, is all that wealth and power can procure a man. If it be said that what is necessary in some countries is

superfluous in others, as clothes in hot climates, bread or flesh meat in countries where each of those articles may not be used, and the like, it is still obvious, that the less money will purchase *necessaries*, whatever they be, the more value it is of, and the more a person may spare out of the same sum for the conveniencies and superfluities of life, by purchasing the labour of his fellow creatures.

We are not, however, to judge of a man's wealth by the number of persons he can maintain, unless those persons contribute nothing by their labour towards their own maintenance. He must, by commanding the labour of *others* (for it cannot be done in any other way) maintain them. But if they be a continual expence to him, as if they were employed in building, or other great works, in the army, or kept upon charity, it seems to be a very fair medium of computation. If therefore, for instance, we read that one person was impoverished by employing one thousand labouring men upon any piece of work, and that another was able to keep two thousand at work, we need not trouble ourselves to consider the situation of their different countries, and times, the prices of provision,  
manner



manner of living, &c. but may very fairly conclude, that the one was twice as rich and powerful as the other.

Under the second head, therefore, I shall endeavour to find the proportion between money and the necessities of life in the different periods of those histories with which a gentleman and scholar would choose to be best acquainted. And at the same time that I endeavour, in this manner, to determine the proportion which the quantity of current money has borne to vendible commodities, I shall, likewise, take notice of the price of money with regard to itself, that is, the *interest* it has born. It is true that the interest of money has been very justly called the barometer of states with respect to other things than those I am now considering, and which may be the subject of a future lecture; but in the mean time it may not be amiss to take notice of it, at present, as a commodity, and on many occasions one of the most necessary. For since money may be of use like any other commodity which a person may make advantage of, he is the richest man (*cæt. par.*) whose stated revenues can purchase the most extensive use of it.

Having explained the nature of this subject, I shall enter upon it, by giving the best account that I have been able to collect (taken almost wholly from Arbuthnot) of the successive changes which have taken place in the value of nominal sums of money among the Greeks and Romans, with the proportion which they bore to commodities, and then give a more particular account of the like changes and proportions in English and French money, and to each I shall subjoin an account of the changes in the rate of interest; not that I shall perhaps keep all these articles perfectly distinct, since very little inconvenience, and perhaps some advantage, may arise from occasionally mixing them.

The Greek coins underwent very little change compared with that of the Roman money, or of the money of modern European states, and therefore the less worthy of our notice. All the allowance we are to make for the changes of value in the *Drachma* (a coin equal to the Roman *Denarius*, and worth about eight-pence of our present money), and to which the changes of value in the rest of their money corresponded is, that from Solon to the time of Alexander

Alexander we must reckon sixty-seven grains for the weight of it, thence to the subjection of Greece by the Romans sixty-five, and under the Romans sixty-two and an half, a change which is very inconsiderable.

The constant and stated rate of the value of gold to silver among the Jews, Greeks, and Romans, in the whole period of ancient times, was ten to one, with very little variation, and the rate of silver to Cyprian brass one hundred to one; and the general supposition is, that there was one fiftieth part of alloy in the gold coins of the ancients. At present gold is to silver as about fifteen to one, and silver to copper as seventy-three to one.

Numa, or Servius Tullius, first stamped brass money among the Romans, silver was not stamped by them till the year of the city four hundred and eighty-five, the time of their war with Pyrrhus, and gold not till sixty-two years after.

The *As*, from being a pound weight aver-dupois, fell to two ounces in the first Punic war, in the second Punic war to one ounce, and presently after it was fixed by the Papyrian law to half an ounce. These alterations were occasioned by the necessities of the commonwealth;

monwealth; but, as Arbuthnot observes, the plenty of gold and silver would have done the same thing, and have brought down such an enormous brass coin; or rather silver coins of an equal value, and of less weight, would have been introduced.

It may easily be imagined how scarce silver was at Rome when, in all the early times of the Roman history, eight hundred and forty pounds of brass were equivalent to one of silver. Some say the proportion between these two metals before the first Punic war was nine hundred and sixty to one. The different proportion which was just now observed to have taken place in Greece, during the same period, shows how little communication there was between Greece and Rome in those times. Indeed the commonwealth gradually reduced this proportion, probably in consequence of a freer intercourse with other nations, which would necessarily be attended with the introduction of silver where it was so scarce.

The adulteration of the Roman coin in some periods of their history exceeds any thing we read of with respect to other countries. The money of Caracalla had more than one half alloy, that of Alexander Severus two thirds,

thirds, and under Gallienus it was nothing more than gilt copper.

To enable us to judge of the proportion of money to commodities, I have selected some of the accounts that I have met with concerning the most necessary articles of consumption in the several countries and ages which I have proposed to consider.

Corn was commonly reckoned in Greece at a drachma the medimnus, which, reduced to our computation, is four shillings and six-pence per quarter. In Demosthenes's time it was much higher; being five drachmas the medimnus, which is about one pound two shillings and seven-pence per quarter. In times of plenty in Greece the price of a sheep was eight-pence, of a hog two shillings, an ox three pounds three shillings; and a soldier served for a drachma a day, which is about eight-pence. Upon the whole, we may perhaps allow that the proportion of money to commodities in the most flourishing time of Greece, or the time in which the classical historians wrote, was about one-third less than it is at present with us; which was about the same that it was in Europe before the discovery of America.

As

As the common people of Rome lived very much upon bread corn, the price of that article will be a better guide to us than any other single circumstance in judging of the proportion between money and the necessaries of life among them. The ancient price of corn in Rome, and to which it was reduced at the burning of Rome by Nero, was three nummi the modius, that is three-pence three-farthings the peck. According to Pliny, the coarsest bread was made of corn worth forty ascs, equal to two shillings and sixpence three-farthings a peck; of wheaten bread forty-eight ascs, equal to three shillings and three-farthings; and the finest of all eighty ascs, or five shillings and one-penny farthing; so that about the time of Pliny, corn was considerably dearer in Rome than it is commonly at London.

The article which stands next to bread corn among the necessaries of life is *cloathing*. Common wearing cloaths, made of wool, such as were always worn at Rome, we should not think very dear. For Cato the elder never wore a suit worth above one hundred drachms, equal to three pounds four shillings and seven-pence; and we must consider that  
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the Roman cloaths were not made close, but large, and loose, and therefore would last longer than our close garments. This article is likewise to be understood of plain undyed cloth, which was white; for the expence of *dyeing*, particularly purple, which the Romans and the ancients in general most of all affected, was prodigious. Pelagium, one species of that dye, was worth fifty nummi, equal to eight shillings and eleven-pence, per pound. The buccinum, another species of it, was double that value; the violet purple was three pounds ten shillings and eleven-pence per pound, and the Tyrian double dye could scarcely be bought for thirty-five pounds nine shillings and one penny farthing per pound. There must also have been a great difference in the fineness of their wool, and consequently in the price of it. For a Roman pound of Padua wool, the finest of all (though indeed when it was rather dear) sold for one hundred nummi, at which rate the English pound troy comes to seventeen shillings and eight-pence three farthings.

Wine seems always to have been cheap at Rome. For, according to Collumella, the  
common

common sort was worth eight pounds per ton.

In the early times of Rome, the price of a good calf was twenty-five asces, equal to one shilling and seven-pence three-eighths. The price of a sheep a denarius, or eight-pence, and the price of an ox ten times as much. These articles Arbuthnot quotes from Pliny, who, no doubt, makes allowance for the alteration in the coin. Otherwise they must have been much dearer than we can reasonably suppose in the early times of the commonwealth. According to Varro, sheep, in his time, were commonly worth twenty-five shillings each, a bullock twelve pounds ten shillings, and a calf three pounds two shillings and sixpence. This makes the price of butcher's meat nearly the same as in London.

An English acre of middling land, for a vineyard, was worth, according to Collumella, fourteen pounds fifteen shillings and three-pence, and the Jugerum was to the English acre as ten to sixteen. According to the same author, the common mean rent of an acre of pasture ground was one pound eight

5 shillings

shillings and ten-pence. Lands were commonly reckoned at twenty-five years purchase. For the lands of the government were so let, paying according to the rate of four pounds per cent.

The price of land was considerably increased by the great treasures brought to Rome in Augustus's reign. An acre of the best ground in the city of Rome, under the emperors, may be reckoned to have brought in a ground rent of five pounds per annum.

The price of an ordinary slave, in Cato major's time, was three hundred and seventy-seven drachms, equal to forty-eight pounds eight shillings and nine-pence.

Before Domitian, the Roman soldiers served for under five-pence, and afterwards for about six-pence a day; so that if we take the price of day labour from the pay of a soldier (which in most countries, and particularly ancient nations, it hardly ever exceeds) it will not make it much higher in Rome than in our own country.

From the prices of all these articles taken together, we should conclude that the proportion which money bore to commodities in the

the most flourishing times of the commonwealth, and under the first emperors, was rather higher than it bears at present with us. But this could only be the case at Rome, and the neighbourhood of it. All the necessaries of life were considerably cheaper in Greece. Polybius, who lived in the time of the third Punic war, says that provisions were so cheap in Italy in his time, that, in some places, the stated club in the inns was a semis a head, which is but little more than a farthing. And under the later emperors the prices of all necessaries were certainly nearly the same that they were in this part of Europe before the discovery of America.

All the articles mentioned above relate to what may be called the *necessaries* of life. How extravagant the Romans were in entertainments and the elegancies of life, we may form some idea of from the following circumstance, that Roscius the actor (whose profession was less respectable at Rome than it is even with us) could gain five hundred sestertia, equal to four thousand and thirty-six pounds nine shillings and two-pence per annum; and per day when he acted one thousand nummi, equal to thirty-

thirty-two pounds five shillings and ten-pence. Various curious instances of Roman luxury may be seen in Arbuthnot.

The most moderate *interest* at Athens was twelve per cent. paid monthly, and according to Aristophanes it was somewhat more. The rent of other things, likewise, was very high in proportion to their value. Antidorus, says Demosthenes, paid three talents and an half for a house, which he let for a talent a year. If this were true, admitting it to have been an extraordinary case, it is no wonder that the hire of money bore so extraordinary a price in proportion to its value. Such circumstances as these are a demonstration of the precarious state of property. For both with regard to money, and every thing else, the more secure it is supposed to be, the less annual interest is required in proportion to its value.

In the early times of the Roman commonwealth too, interest was, at a medium, twelve per cent. In the flourishing times of the commonwealth it was at six, and though it was suddenly reduced to four upon the conquest of Egypt, it presently rose to its old standard; and in Pliny's time six per cent. was the public customary interest of money; Jus-

tinian reduced it to four per cent. and money lent to masters of ships to one per cent. per month. This kind of interest had before been two per cent. per month.

But there was a peculiarity in the Roman method of putting out money to interest, which must be explained, as we have nothing like it with us. With them it was customary after one hundred and one months to add six per cent. to the principal, besides the simple interest which was due upon the sum. This they called *anatocismos*, so that their usual rate for long interest was neither simple nor compound, but something between both.

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## LECTURE XVI.

*Of the English coins. Saxon and Norman Coins compared. When Gold and Copper began to be coined by our Kings. A Table of all the Changes in the Value of English Coins. The Proportion between Gold and Silver, and between Coin and Commodities in different Periods of our History. A Table of all the*

8 *Changes*



*Changes of the French Coins from the Time of Charlemaigne. A general Idea of the Proportion it has, at different Times, born to Commodities in France. Of the different Rates of Interest in Europe in different Periods. The Number and Riches of a People to be considered in computing the proportional Quantities of the Money they raise.*

THE English money, though the same names do by no means correspond to the same quantity of precious metal as formerly, has not changed so much as the money of most other countries. In this part of my subject I am so happy as to be able to give a much more complete deduction of the changes both in the value of money, and the proportion it has born to commodities, than in the preceding. A view of all the changes which the standard of our money has ever undergone, I shall present to you at once, in a table extracted from the account lately published of *English coins* by the society of antiquaries. But previous to this it will be proper to inform you, that, in the Saxon times, a shilling (at one time at least) was reckoned to contain five-pence, or pennyweights, and one

pound contained forty-eight shillings, which is the same number of pence that a pound contains now.

However, the proportion between the *shilling* and either the *penny* on the one hand, or the *pound* on the other, seems not to have been so constant and uniform as that between the *penny* and the *pound*. During the first race of the kings of France, the French *sou*, or *shilling*, appears, upon different occasions, to have contained five, twelve, twenty, and forty pennies. From the time of Charlemagne among the French, and from that of William the Conqueror among the English, the proportion between the *pound*, the *shilling*, and the *penny*, seems to have been uniformly the same as at present \*.

Though a different distribution of the subdivisions of a pound was introduced with the Normans, yet William the Conqueror brought no new weight into his mint; but the same weight used there some ages after, and called the *pound of the tower of London*, was the old pound of the Saxon moniers before the conquest. This pound was lighter than the pound troy by three ounces. It was divided

\* Smith's Wealth of Nations, vol. i. p. 40.

into

into two hundred and forty pence, and consequently the intrinsic value of that sum in weight was the same as the value of fifty-eight shillings and three halfpence of our present coined money.

It may not be improper also to premise, that Edward III. was the first of our kings who coined any gold; and that no copper was coined by authority before James I. These pieces were not called *farthings*, but *farthing tokens*, and all people were at liberty to take or refuse them. Before the time of Edward III. gold was exchanged, like any other commodity, by its weight; and before the time of James I. copper was stamped by any person who chose to do it.

The following table exhibits, at one view, the standard of our silver money as to goodness, together with the true weight of two hundred and forty pence, sixty groats, or twenty shillings, making the pound sterling in tale, and the present intrinsic value of so much silver as was respectively contained in the same pound sterling at the several times there noted in the first column. To this is also added, in the last, the same intrinsic value of the nominal pound sterling, expressed

in decimals of our present sterling pound; whereby the proportion of the intrinsic value of any sum of money mentioned in books, to the intrinsic value of so much money as it is now called by the same appellation, may immediately be known, and the prices of provisions, labour, and materials in former times, may readily be compared with the different prices which the like provisions, labour, and materials, are found to bear at this day.

The meaning of the term *old sterling*, in the second column of the following table, is that eleven ounces two pennyweights of fine silver, were contained in twelve ounces of old coin. The numbers which express the alterations made afterwards show the additional quantity of alloy used in some reigns.

TABLE.

## T A B L E.

Year of the king's reign, and A. D.	Standard of Silver.	Weight of 20s. in tale.	Value of the same in present money			Proportion.
			l.	s.	d.	
Conquest - 1066	Old sterling	11 5 0	2	18	1½	2,906
28 Edward I. 1300	Ditto	11 2 5	2	17	5	2,871
18 Edw. III. 1344	Ditto	10 3 0	2	12	5¼	2,621
20 ditto - 1346	Ditto	10 0 0	2	11	8	2,583
27 ditto - 1353	Ditto	9 0 0	2	6	6	2,325
13 Henry IV. 1412	Ditto	7 10 0	1	18	9	1,937
4 Edw. IV. 1464	Ditto	6 0 0	1	11	0	1,555
18 Hen. VIII. 1527	Ditto	5 6 16	1	7	6¾	1,378
54 ditto - 1543	w. 10z. 2dw.	5 0 0	1	3	3¼	1,163
36 ditto - 1545	5 2	Ditto	0	13	11½	0,693
37 ditto - 1546	7 2	Ditto	0	9	3¾	0,466
3 Edw. VI. 1549	5 2	3 6 16	Ditto			Ditto
5 ditto - 1551	8 2	Ditto	0	4	7¼	0,232
6 ditto - 1552	0 1	4 0 0	1	0	6¾	1,028
1 Mary - 1553	0 2	Ditto	1	0	5¾	1,024
2 Eliz. - 1560	Old sterling	Ditto	1	0	8	1,033
43 ditto - 1601	Ditto	3 17 10	1	0	0	1,000

It appears that in the twenty-seventh year of king Edward III. 1353, when the first considerable coinage of gold was made in England, fine gold was rated in our coins at eleven times and about one-sixth part as much as fine silver. But even this value of gold was thought too great in the time of Henry IV.; and the same being complained of, by the regulations made in his thirteenth year, 1412, gold came to be exchanged for ten times and about a third of an equal quantity of silver. In the fourth year of Edward IV. 1464, gold

was again valued at a little more than eleven times the price of silver. During one hundred and forty years next following there was scarce any alteration made in the proportional value of the two metals, excepting only in the times of confusion, between the thirty-fourth year of Henry VIII. and the last of Edward VI.; and by the indentures of the forty-third year of queen Elizabeth, and those of the first of king James, 1603, the pound weight of fine gold in the coin was yet rated at somewhat less than eleven pounds weight of silver. But soon after that time the price of gold was sensibly advanced, the pound weight of it being valued in the indentures of the second year of king James at more than twelve pounds and an ounce; and in the seventeenth year of the same king, at more than thirteen pounds four ounces and three pennyweights of fine silver. When guineas came first to be coined for twenty shilling pieces, in the fifteenth year of Charles II. 1663, the pound of fine gold was made equivalent to fourteen pounds five ounces sixteen pennyweights and nine grains of fine silver; which value (by the running of guineas as they now do for twenty-one shillings each) is yet farther advanced



vanced to fifteen pounds two ounces ten pennyweights and seven grains of the same silver,

The Scots money pound contained, from the time of Alexander the First, to that of Robert Bruce, a pound of silver of the same weight and fineness with the English pound sterling. Their pound and penny now contain about a thirty-sixth part of their original value \*.

Having thus exhibited a view of the successive changes of the English coin to the present time, I shall endeavour to ascertain the proportion that money has from time to time borne to commodities, by means of the prices of things taken at proper intervals, from the times of the Saxons down to our own.

In the year 712 and 727 an ewe and lamb were rated at one shilling Saxon money till a fortnight after Easter. Between 900 and 1000, two hydes of land, each containing about one hundred and twenty acres, were sold for one hundred shillings. In 1000, by king Ethelred's laws, a horse was rated at thirty shillings, a mare, or a colt of a year old, at twenty shillings, a mule, or young ass, at twelve shillings, an ox at thirty pence,

\* Smith on the Wealth of Nations, vol. i. p. 39, 41.

a cow at twenty-four pence, a swine eight-pence, a sheep at one shilling. In 1043, a quarter of wheat was sold for sixty pence. From these, and some other similar facts, it is computed that in the Saxon times, there was ten times less money in proportion to commodities than at present. Their nominal species, therefore, being about three times higher than ours, the price of every thing, according to our present language, must be reckoned thirty times cheaper than it is now.

In the reign of William the Conqueror commodities were ten times cheaper than they are at present; from which we cannot help forming a very high idea of the wealth and power of that king. For the revenue of William the Conqueror was four hundred thousand pounds per annum, every pound being equal to that weight of silver. Consequently the whole may be estimated at one million two hundred thousand pounds of the present computation; a sum which, considering the different value of money between that period and the present time, was equivalent to twelve millions of modern estimation.

The most necessary commodities do not  
seem,

seem to have advanced their price from William the Conqueror to Richard I.

The price of corn in the reign of Henry III. was near half the mean price in our times. Bishop Fleetwood has shown that in the year 1240, which was in this reign, four pounds thirteen shillings and nine-pence was worth about fifty pounds of our present money. About the latter end of this reign Robert de Hay, rector of Souldern, agreed to receive one hundred shillings to purchase to himself and successor the annual rent of five shillings, in full compensation of an acre of corn.

Butcher's meat, in the time of the great scarcity in the reign of Edward II. was, by a parliamentary ordinance, sold three times cheaper than our mean price at present; poultry somewhat lower, because being now considered as a delicacy, it has risen beyond its proportion. The mean price of corn in this period was half the present value, and the mean price of cattle one-eighth.

In the next reign, which was that of Edward III. the most necessary commodities were, in general, about three or four times cheaper than they are at present.

In these times knights, who served on horseback

horseback in the army, had two shillings a day, and a foot archer six-pence; which last would now be equal to a crown a day. This pay has continued nearly the same nominally (only that in the time of the commonwealth the pay of the horse was advanced to two shillings and sixpence, and that of the foot to one shilling; though it was reduced again at the restoration) but soldiers were proportionably of a better rank formerly.

In the time of Henry VI. corn was about half its present value, other commodities much cheaper. Bishop Fleetwood has determined, from a most accurate consideration of every circumstance, that five pounds in this reign were equivalent to twenty-eight, or thirty, now.

In the time of Henry VII. many commodities were three times as cheap here, and in all Europe, as they are at present, there having been a great increase of gold and silver in Europe since his time, occasioned by the discovery of America.

The commodities whose price has risen the most since before the time of Henry VII. are butcher's meat, fowls, and fish; especially the latter. And the reason why corn was  
always

always much dearer in proportion to other eatables, according to their prices at present, is, that in early times agriculture was little understood. It required more labour and expence, and was more precarious than it is at present. Indeed, notwithstanding the high price of corn in the times we are speaking of, the raising of it so little answered the expence, that agriculture was almost universally quitted for grazing; which was more profitable, notwithstanding the low price of butcher's meat. So that there was constant occasion for statutes to restrain grazing, and to promote agriculture; and no effectual remedy was found till the bounty upon the exportation of corn; since which, above ten times more corn has been raised in this country than before.

The price of corn in the time of James I. and consequently that of other necessaries of life, was not lower, but rather higher, than at present; wool is not two-thirds of the value it was then; the finer manufactures having rather sunk in price by the progress of art and industry, notwithstanding the increase of money. Butcher's meat was higher than at present. Prince Henry made an allowance of near four-pence per pound for all the beef and

and mutton used in his family. This may be true with respect to London; but the price of butcher's meat in the country, which does not even now much exceed this price at a medium, has certainly greatly increased of late years, and particularly in the northern counties.

The FRENCH money has suffered much more by the diminution of its value than the English. Voltaire gives the following general account of it. The numerary pound in the time of Charlemagne was twelve ounces of silver. This pound was divided into twenty sols, and the sols into twelve deniers. In Europe that sol, which was equal to a crown at present, is now no more than a light piece of copper with a mixture of at most one-eleventh of silver. The livre which formerly represented twelve ounces of silver, is in France no more than twenty copper sols, and the denier is one-third of that base coin we call a liard. Whereas a pound sterling is worth about twenty-two francs of France, and the Dutch pound is nearly equal to twelve. But the following table will exhibit all the successive changes of the French livre in a more particular and distinct manner.

REIGNS.



REIGNS.	DATES.	Value of the Money in the present Money of France.		
Charlemagne from -	763 to 1113	66 Livres	8 Sols.	0 Den.
Lewis VI. VII. -	1113 to 1158	18	13	6
Philip Augustus - -	1222	19	18	4½
St. Lewis and Phil. } the Hardy - - }	1226	18	4	11
Phil. the Fair - -	1285	17	19	0
Lewis Hutin and Phil. } lip the Long - }	1313	18	8	10
Charles the Fair - -	1321	17	3	7
Philip de Valois - -	1344	14	11	10
John - - - - -	1364	9	19	2½
Charles V. - - -	1380	9	9	8
Charles VI. - - -	1422	7	2	3
Charles VII. - - -	1461	5	13	9
Lewis XI. - - - -	1483	4	19	7
Charles VIII. - -	1497	4	10	7
Lewis XII. - - -	1514	3	19	8
Francis I. - - -	1546	3	11	2
Hen. II. and Francis II.	1559	3	6	
Charles IX. - - -	1574	2	18	7
Henry III. - - -	1589	2	12	11
Henry IV. - - -	1611	2	8	0
Lewis XIII. - - -	1642	1	15	3
Lewis XIV. - - -	1715	1	4	11
Lewis XV. - - -	1720	0	8	0
Present Livre - - -	1720	1	0	0

Voltaire also gives us the following useful caution with respect to the computations made by several considerable French writers. Rolin, Fleury, and all the most useful writers, when they would express the value of talents, minæ and sesterces, compute by an estimate made before the death of Colbert. But the mark of eight ounces, which was then worth twenty-six franks, ten sols, is now worth forty-

forty-nine livres ten sols; a difference which amounts to near one half. Without remembering this variation, we should have a very erroneous idea of the strength of ancient states, &c.

The changes in the proportion between money and commodities in France may easily be imagined to have kept pace pretty nearly with those in England, and therefore need not be particularly pointed out. Accordingly, Voltaire observes that all provisions were eight or ten times cheaper in proportion to the quantity of money in Charlemagne's time; but he cannot be supposed to speak very accurately, when he says that in the reign of Lewis XI. who was contemporary with Edward IV. money, meaning of the same standard, was worth about double of what it is at present, and also that it was of the same value in the reign of Lewis XIII. who reigned in the last year of James I. and the beginning of Charles I. For betwixt those two reigns was an interval of one hundred and fifty years, in which was the discovery of America, which occasioned the greatest general alteration of the proportion between money and commodities that ever was made in this part of the world.

world. In the former reign, therefore, the value of money must have been much greater, and perhaps in the latter reign less, than he makes it. At present the prices of commodities are higher in England than in France, besides that the poor people of France live upon much less than the poor in England, and their armies are maintained at less expence. It is computed by Mr. Hume, that a British army of twenty thousand men is maintained at near as great an expence as sixty thousand in France, and that the English fleet in the war of 1741 required as much money to support it as all the Roman legions in the time of the emperors. However, all that we can conclude from this last article is, that money is much more plentiful in Europe at present than it was in the Roman empire.

In the thirteenth century the common interest which the Jews had for their money, Voltaire says, was twenty per cent. But with regard to this we must consider the great contempt that nation was always held in, the large contributions they were frequently obliged to pay, the risk they run of never receiving the principal, the frequent confiscation of all their effects, and the violent persecutions to which

they were exposed; in which circumstances it was impossible for them to lend money at all unless for a most extravagant interest, and much disproportioned to its real value. Before the discovery of America, and the plantation of our colonies, the interest of money was generally twelve per cent. all over Europe; and it has been growing gradually less since that time till it is now generally about four or five.

When sums of money are said to be raised by a whole people, in order to form a just estimate of them, we must take into consideration not only the quantity of the precious metal according to the standard of the coin, and the proportion of the quantity of coin to the commodities, but also the number and riches of the people who raise it. For admitting the two circumstances which have been already explained to be the same; still populous and rich countries will much more easily raise any certain sum of money than one that is thinly inhabited, and chiefly by poor people. This circumstance greatly adds to our surprise at the vast sums of money raised by William the Conqueror, who had a revenue nearly in value equal to twelve millions of pounds

pounds of our money (allowance being made for the standard of coin and the proportion it bore to commodities) from a country not near so populous or rich as England is at present. Indeed the accounts historians give us of the revenues of this prince, and the treasure he left behind him, are barely credible.

Next to judging of the real value of sums of money mentioned by historians, it is of importance to have just ideas of the *measures of length and capacity*, which occur in them. But these are subject to little variation, so that the common tables of those things, whether adapted to the present or former times; to our own or remote nations, are sufficient for the purpose of reading history, and require no illustration.

## PART IV.

DIRECTIONS FOR FACILITATING THE  
STUDY OF HISTORY.

## LECTURE XVII.

*Use of Compendiums. The best Epitomes of History. Mechanical Methods which have been used to facilitate the Study of History. Chronological Tables. Character of different Tables. Sturt's Tables. Genealogical Tables.*

IN the fourth division of our subject, which we are now entering upon, I proposed to give you some directions for facilitating the study of history; both that it may more effectually answer the end proposed by it, and that you may pursue it with more satisfaction.

One of the most useful directions I can give you is to begin with authors who present you with a *compendium*, or general view of the whole subject of history, and afterwards to apply to the study of any particular history with which you choose to be more thoroughly



roughly acquainted. This is like sketching an entire outline before you finish any part of a picture, and learning the grand divisions of the earth before you study the geography of particular countries; and several very obvious advantages attend this method, to whatever it be applied.

The principal advantage of this method in studying history is, that you have hereby a clear idea what figure the history to which you propose to give more particular attention makes in the history of the world; and by this means are enabled to judge, in some measure, of the importance of it. Besides, it will contribute greatly to your satisfaction in reading history, and answer some useful purposes in the study of it, to have some idea of the preceding, the contemporary, and (if it be ancient history) of the succeeding state of the world in general, and of that particular part of the world of which you are reading. Whereas that knowledge can be but very limited, and scanty, which is derived from ever so minute an inspection of any single portion of history. As well might we expect a good judgment of the regularity and beauty of an extensive building from viewing a small part of it. We are only

missed by such a method of study. But a close examination of particular parts is very useful after a general view of the whole of any thing.

For this reason, the history of our own country, though the most worthy of a particular study, is not proper to begin with. We can form no idea of the English nation in general, and the history of it, with regard to the rest of the world, unless we can compare an idea of the whole compass of it with a like idea of the whole compass of history in general, or that of other particular nations. But, when once we have gotten a general idea how the whole course of history, as we may say, lies, we apply with pleasure and advantage to the more minute consideration of our own country, and prevent any prejudice or inconvenience of any kind, which we should be exposed to from a close attention to so small a portion of history, without knowing its relation to the whole of history, of which it is a part.

This same advice is applicable to a person who proposes to study any particular *period* of the history of a particular country. Let him first make himself acquainted with the history

tory of the country in general, and then study the history of the particular period. It is but a very imperfect idea that a person could get of the history of the civil wars in England during the reign of Charles I.; for instance, from reading such a single history as that of Clarendon, were the performance ever so excellent, while confined to the occurrences of that time. We ought to go very far back in our history to have a just idea of the true state of the parties that existed in those times, and the opposition of which occasioned such a dreadful convulsion in the English government.

I may add, that it is men's forming their notions of such times as these from detached pieces, particularly such as are written by the known friends of one or other of the parties, from professed panegyrics or invectives, or from sermons (which are almost always one or the other of them, and generally the extremes of the one or the other) that they are more than misled in their ideas of these times. From this method of forming ideas of history is derived much of the bigotry, and spirit of faction, which has prevailed in this, or any other nation. This advice, therefore,

to peruse some account of the whole of history before you apply to any particular history, and the whole of any particular history before you study any particular period of it, is of more importance than at first sight it appears to be.

This general acquaintance with the whole course of history will make it less necessary to attend to the *order* in which particular histories are read; because a person thus prepared will be able to refer any particular history he takes up to its proper place in universal history. And though particular histories be read without any regard to the order of time or place, they will easily range themselves, as we may say, without any confusion, in their proper place in his mind.

Besides, universal history is an immense field, with which the compass of no single life is sufficient to bring a man even tolerably acquainted. Since, therefore, it is only a part of history that any person can propose to make himself intimately acquainted with, it is of advantage to be able to choose the most important part, and what is most worthy of his attention, which he will be able to do from having a general idea of the whole subject

ject of history in its proper order and connexion.

The most celebrated epitome of universal history written in Latin is *Turfelin's*, which is read in most of the foreign universities. It is indeed a judicious and elegant performance; but in almost every page of the modern parts there are such marks of strong attachment to the principles of popery, as cannot but give disgust to a zealous protestant. Bossuet's epitome of universal history is greatly and deservedly admired in France; but it brings the history no lower than the time of Charlemagne. One of the most useful epitomes, upon the whole, is that written by baron Holberg in Latin, and translated with improvements into English by Gregory Sharpe. The principal defect in it is, that too little notice is taken of the history of Greece. The most valuable of the larger kind of epitomes are Rollin's of the ancient history, and Puffendorf's of the modern.

One of the most obvious contrivances to reduce history into a short compass, and to make an entire course of it easy to be comprehended, and at the same time to observe a proper distinction between the parts of it,  
has

has been by CHRONOLOGICAL TABLES; and if they consist of nothing more than an enumeration of the capital events in history, thrown together promiscuously, without any distinction of kingdoms, regard being only had to the order of time in which the events happened, they have their use. We thereby see the principal things that history exhibits, and from the dates annexed to each article, may form an idea of the interval of time between each of them. Such tables as these are published along with a variety of single histories, to which, indeed, they are particularly suited. Such is the *Short Chronicle* prefixed to *Newton's Chronology*.

But when a history is very complex, it may easily be conceived to be a great advantage to have the separate parts kept distinct, by being arranged in different columns. By this means we have a distinct idea of the course of any single history, and at the same time a clear comparative view of the contemporary state of any other history which runs parallel with it. The confusion attending the neglect of this method may be seen in the chronological tables published with the *Universal History*, and the advantage of adopting it in such tables

as



as *Marshall's*, *Tallent's*, &c. Indeed those adapted to the Universal History, could not have been brought into any tolerable compass on a more distinct and perfect plan.

Besides a distinct view of the succession of events in different histories, it is an advantage to have, in separate columns, an account of the *great men*, in arts or arms, which each age has produced. This has been exhibited by the last mentioned authors and others. Two columns are quite sufficient for this purpose; one for *statesmen* and *warriors*, and the other for *men of learning*.

Another improvement in chronological tables has been to annex a variety of *dates*, in distinct columns, to every event, to save the reader the trouble of reducing the different methods of computation to one another. But many chronologers have multiplied these different epochas far beyond any real use, so as greatly to encumber their page, and leave little room for more valuable matter. *Helvicus*, among others, is an example of this. Four æras are abundantly sufficient, namely, the year before and after Christ, and the Julian period to run through the whole extent of  
the

the work; the Olympiads for the course of the Grecian history, and the year of the city for the Roman. These are used by Blair.

The last and capital improvement in chronological tables, which has been effected in some measure by Tallent, and Marshall, more perfectly in *Helvicus*, but most completely by *Blair*, is to dispose the events in such a manner, as that the distance at which they are placed, without attending to the date in the margin, shall give a just idea of the real interval of time between them. This is done by having a single line, or any set space, appropriated to any certain period of time, or number of years.

In the chronological tables engraved by *Sturt* we see a great deal of matter, by a singular method, and the help of arbitrary and symbolical characters, crowded into a short compass; so that we see the state of the several kingdoms of Europe for any century since the Christian æra in a single page. This author has also annexed an alphabetical index to his work, in which, by the help of symbols, he has expressed the character of every Prince mentioned in his tables, and the principal events

events of his life. This small work is valuable for its conciseness, but is not so much recommended by its distinctness.

Very much of the perspicuity of history depends on conceiving clearly the order of *generations* and the *right of succession* in regal and other families, i. e. in what manner the great personages who have been competitors for crowns, or rivals in power, were related to one another. In this respect GENEALOGICAL TABLES are of unspeakable use. Indeed it is not possible, by words, to give so easy and perfect a view of the descent of families, as by the help of lines and figures. For local position is apprehended entirely, with whatever can be represented by it, at one view, and without the least danger of mistake; whereas if the history of family connexions, which is necessarily a very complex and intricate thing, be expressed in words, we see only a part at a time; and before the whole can be laid before us, in this slow manner, some essential circumstance will have been forgotten.

The most natural order of genealogical tables seems to be to place the common stock at the head of the table, and the several descents,

or succeeding generations, each in a lower line appropriated to it; and not to make the order of generations proceed from the left hand to the right, as is done by some. But every distinct generation should by all means be placed in a line, or space, appropriated to itself: otherwise, our ideas will be greatly confused. The *order of birth* in the same generation may easily be observed (as is done in some of our best tables) by placing the first-born to the left hand in the table, and the rest, according to the order of birth, to the right.

There are a variety of other relations, besides mere natural descent, which it is very useful to have a clear idea of, as the connexion by marriage, by adoption among the Romans, &c. by which different families are intermixed. And it is possible, by different kinds of lines, joining the names so connected, how remote soever, in the table of generation, to express all these relations, without the use of words. But as the attempt to express them all by characters disfigures the table with a great variety of lines, many of them of considerable length, and extending themselves in every direction, it seems most convenient

venient to express *natural descent* only by characters, and to subjoin to each name an account, in words, of all its other connexions, referring at most from one to another by *marks* contrived for that purpose. This method Rapin has taken in the excellent genealogical tables in his history of England.

Some valuable tables of genealogy may be seen at the end of *Petavius's Chronology*; but the largest and most complete body of genealogies is that published by *Anderson*; which, in one large volume folio, contains all the genealogies he could collect from the whole body of history, ancient and modern.

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## LECTURE XVIII.

*Chart of History. Chart of Biography. Grey's Memoria Technica. The Method of a common Place-Book for the Purpose of History.*

THE most ingenious and useful contrivance to facilitate the study of history, and to aid the imagination in conceiving distinctly, and  
compre-

comprehending the whole course of it, in all its parts, co-existent and successive, is the *chart of history* lately imported from France. This is properly a picture of all history, and is made by such natural methods of expression, that it renders visible to the eye, without reading, the whole figure and dimensions of all history, general and particular; and so perfectly shows the origin, progress, extent, and duration, of all kingdoms and states that ever existed, at one view, with every circumstance of time and place, uniting chronology and geography, that it not only, in the most agreeable manner, refreshes the memory, without the fatigue of reading; but a novice in history may learn more from it by a mere attentive inspection of a few hours, than he can acquire by the reading of many weeks or months.

This chart will not, indeed, give a person the knowledge of any thing that passed *within* a kingdom, and which produced no actual alteration in the extent of its territories, or of the manner in which conquests were made or lost. But a person may by the help of it gain a clearer idea *when*, and *by what nations* conquests were made, how far they extended,  
and



and how long they continued, than he could ever get by reading.

It is obvious to remark, that this chart must answer, in the completest manner imaginable, almost every use of a compendium of history, proper to be read before a larger and fuller course be entered upon; and it will prevent any confusion which might arise from reading particular histories without a regard to their proper order of time or place, better than any abstract of universal history whatever. For it is but casting our eye for a minute upon this chart, and we see, at one glance, the contemporary state of the whole world at the period of which we are reading, and the preceding and succeeding state of the particular country, the history of which we are studying.

It is an inconvenience in this particular chart that *different scales* are made use of to represent the same number of years in different parts of it; so that the same distance, as seen by the eye, does not represent the same portion of time in every part of it. This might easily have been obviated by doubling the width of the chart, or at most, by omit-

ting the earlier and obscure part of the history \*.

The state of the world with respect to the *persons* who have made the greatest figure in it, may be exhibited with much more ease and advantage by means of *lines* and *space*, than the state of the world even with respect to the different powers to which the parts of it have been subject. For whereas, in this, regard must be had to both the circumstances of *time* and *place* (not to say that, in many cases, it is not easy to determine when territories were really acquired or lost) with regard to *single lives*, the circumstance of *time* only is to be taken in.

If, therefore, every man's life be expressed by a *line* proportioned to the length of it, and all the lines be adapted to the same scale, and terminated in their proper places with regard to universal time, such a *chart of biography* will exhibit, in the clearest manner imaginable, without reading, the entire suc-

\* Since this was written I have published a *new Chart of History*, in which I have avoided the faults above mentioned, and have introduced several improvements. It is of the same size with my *Chart of Biography*, drawn upon the same scale, and made to correspond to it in all respects.

cession of great men in every age and of every profession, with the relative length of their lives. So that if we attend to any period of time, we not only see who flourished in it, but how all their ages stood with respect to one another; whereby we not only see who were a man's contemporaries, but also how far any of them was before him, or how far after him, in the order of their births or deaths; which will be of use to assist us in judging of the advantages or disadvantages they respectively lay under with regard to knowledge and instruction.

How much more readily, and with how much less fatigue of the imagination, lines thus disposed will suggest the idea of the relative length of men's lives, may be conceived from this circumstance, that the names of the *numbers* which express the time of a person's birth and death, do not suggest a definite idea of the interval between them, till they be reduced to the idea of *extension*; an expedient which, I believe, all persons naturally and mechanically have recourse to. Our idea of *time* is always that of a *line*, and a longer or shorter space of time is represented in our minds by the idea of a longer or shorter

line; so that, in this method, the process of the mind, of reducing intervals of time to lines, is superseded, and done in a more accurate manner than any person could do it in his own mind for himself.

Moreover, a biographical chart of this kind, filled with names properly selected, in every kind of eminence, will exhibit what ages have abounded most with great men, and what were barren of them; and this in a more comprehensive and distinct manner than can be acquired by reading; a view which cannot fail agreeably to amuse a speculative mind.

It will be a necessary, and remediless defect in every chart of this nature, that the time of the death, and especially of the birth of many persons cannot be found. But then it will be easy to contrive proper characters to express the uncertainty there may be with respect to either of these particulars.

It hardly need be mentioned, that it cannot be expected that such a chart as this should be drawn up according to the real *merit* of the persons inserted in it. Besides, it is a regard to *celebrity* only that can make it of any use to a reader of history. A chart of real merit  
would,

would, no doubt, be very different from this. Many names which make the greatest figure in the *tablet of fame* would not be found in that of merit; and again, many names would be seen in that of merit, which no person who became acquainted with men by fame only, would have any knowledge of\*.

In this enumeration of the methods to illustrate and retain history, we must by no means forget the ingenious Mr. Grey's *memorial lines*, of such admirable use to recollect *dates* with exactness. Of all things, there is the greatest difficulty in retaining *numbers*. They are like grains of sand, which will not cohere in the order in which we place them; but by transmuting *figures* into *letters*, which easily cohere, in every form of combination, we fix and retain numbers in the mind with the same ease and certainty with which we remember words. Thus when Mr. Grey, in his *Memoria Technica*, annexes a chronological date to the termination of the name, it is only pronouncing it with his variation, and we instantly recollect its proper date. For

\* Such a *Chart of Biography* as this I have drawn up and published, and a specimen of it, and also one of the *Chart of History*, are given with this work.

example, if we can remember that Mr. Grey calls Rome *Romput* (which the very oddness of the variation will make us less liable to forget) since he makes (*p*) to stand for seven (*u*) for five, and (*t*) for three, we immediately recollect, that seven hundred and fifty-three before Christ is the date usually assigned to the building of Rome. If, moreover, we can learn to repeat the names of kings in the order in which he has digested them (which his verses, rough as they are, make it pretty easy to do) we shall have not only the years when each of them began their reigns, but also the order of their succession.

As this method is so easily learned, and may be of so much use in recollecting dates, when other methods are not at hand, particularly in conversation upon the subject of history, when dates are often wanted, I think all persons of a liberal education inexcusable, who will not take the small degree of pains that is necessary to make themselves masters of it; or who think any thing mean, or unworthy of their notice, which is so useful and convenient.

Mr. Grey's attempt to apply this method to the numbers which occur in astronomy,  
tables



tables of weights and measures, &c. is likewise extremely useful; but his application of it to geography is unnatural and useless.

In order to secure the most valuable fruits of history, it is absolutely necessary that they be repositied in a *common-place book*. For the memory of no person whatever, who reads much history, is sufficient to retain all he reads, or even the most valuable part of it. The easiest method I can direct you to for making a common-place book for this purpose is the following. Whenever you meet with any fact which you wish to preserve, put it down under some general head, as *religion, government, commerce, war, &c.* reserving every two opposite pages in your book for one of these heads, and note it in a separate place at the end, or beginning of the book, with the page in which it may be found; and when any two pages are filled, either open two other pages with the same title; or, if you perceive that the title you first began with was too comprehensive, divide it into whatever parts you think most convenient. If these titles should grow so numerous as that any of them cannot easily be found in the promiscuous manner in which they were first

set down, it will be easy, at any time, to reduce them to the order of the alphabet, in another page; and the former, which will then be superfluous, may be cancelled.

N. B. *Let the person who gives this Lecture and the preceding, come to his class prepared to exhibit the different TABLES, &c. explained, or mentioned in it.*

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## LECTURE XIX.

*The Terms of Fortification explained, by the Help of a Model of all its Varieties cut in Wood; to enable young Gentlemen to understand modern History, and the News-Papers, and to judge of the progress of a siege\*.*

\* My custom was to explain the *model*, without having any thing written to read on the subject. The terms belonging to the art of *Fortification* are easily learned from books.

## LECTURE XX.

*A regular Progress in History pleasing. The Order in which ancient general Histories may most conveniently be read, so as to make them one continued Series of History; together with the Character of the Historians as they are mentioned, and an Account of those Passages in other Authors which may serve to enlarge the History of the several Periods of which they treat. Of Herodotus.*

As a regular progression in any thing is generally agreeable; and we are carried along the course of history (to use a metaphor) with more pleasure, when we go uniformly with the *current of time*, and are not carried backward and forward, in the course of our reading; I shall, for the sake of those who have opportunity and leisure to go to the sources of ancient history, give, from *Wheare's Lectures on History*, published by Bohun, a method in which the principal authors of antiquity may be read, so as to collect from them a pretty regular series of facts, which will comprise the history of Asia, Africa, Greece, and  
Rome,

Rome, till the dissolution of the empire of Constantinople. And, for the sake of those who do not choose to depend on *compilers* for the history of their own country, I shall likewise name the original authors of the English history in the order in which they may be read, according to the time of which they treat.

I shall also take this opportunity of noting a few of the most necessary observations on the characters of the principal historians; and to the accounts of each author in the regular series of the ancient historians, I shall subjoin an account of those other authors, and passages of other historians, which may be of use to enlarge and complete the history of the period he treats of; that any person may either read the principal authors only, which follow one another, in the order of time, or may, as he has opportunity, get a fuller and more satisfactory knowledge from the other authors of any particular period before he proceeds to another. I shall also carefully distinguish the subjects of every history, and the period of time in which it falls, compared with the time in which the author lived, as one circumstance proper to be taken into consideration

ration in judging of the credibility of any historian.

As the histories of Greece and Rome have little or no connexion till the final conquest of Greece by the Romans, I shall often depart from the strict order of time, not to interrupt the order of reading the Grecian and Asiatic history by a regard to the contemporary history of Rome, but begin the Roman history after the conquest of Greece.

The oldest history extant, next to the historical books of the Old Testament, is that of *Herodotus* of Halicarnassus, who flourished about four hundred and fifty years before the christian æra, a little after the invasion of Greece by Xerxes. His history comprises probably every thing he had an opportunity of learning concerning the history of the Lydians, Ionians, Lycians, Egyptians, Persians, Greeks, and Macedonians. Computing from the earliest of his accounts to the latest, his history may be reckoned to commence about seven hundred and thirteen years before Christ, and to reach to about the year 479 before Christ; a period of about two hundred and thirty-four years.

This author was never charged with partiality

tiality except by Plutarch with regard to the Bœotians only, which is not worth our notice, since the Bœotians were Plutarch's countrymen, and he could not bear that any reflection, though ever so just, should be cast upon them. But he is generally thought to be too fond of the marvellous. It is certain that he has inserted many fabulous things in his history, though very often with sufficient intimations of his own disbelief, or suspicion of them. And it is an argument greatly in favour of this ancient writer, that his chronology requires less correction, according to Newton's canons, than that of any subsequent Greek historian. The greatest inconvenience attending the reading of him arises from his *method*, which is the most irregular and digressive that can be conceived; some entire histories coming in as it were by way of *parenthesis* in the bodies of others. But with all his faults he is a most pleasing writer.

A more particular account of several things in the period of which Herodotus treats may be extracted from the following authors. Justin, book i. ii. iii. and vii. Xenophon's *Cyropædia*. The lives of Aristides, Themistocles, Cimon, Miltiades, and Pausanias, written by Plutarch



Plutarch and Cornelius Nepos. And those of Anaximander, Zeno, Empedocles, Heraclitus, and Democritus, by Diogenés Laertius.

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## LECTURE XXI.

*Of Thucydides, Xenophon, Diodorus Siculus, Quintus Curtius, Arrian, Justin, Plutarch, and Cornelius Nepos.*

NEXT to Herodotus, *Thucydides* is to be read. He proposed to write the history of the Peloponnesian war; but introductory to this, his principal and professed subject, he gives a summary view of the history of Greece from the departure of Xerxes to the commencement of that war, which connects his history with that of Herodotus. His history, however, reaches no farther than the twenty-first year of the Peloponnesian war.

Thucydides was an Athenian, and employed by his country in some command in the war of which he treats; but not being crowned with success, in an undertaking to which the forces he was entrusted,

trusted with were not equal, he was deprived of his command by that inconstant people, and obliged to take refuge among the Lacedæmonians.

It is impossible to discover any marks of partiality in this writer, notwithstanding we cannot read him without making ourselves a party with the Athenians. There is all the appearance imaginable of the strictest fidelity, and the most punctual adherence to truth in his history; notwithstanding he was probably the first historian who introduced the unnatural custom of putting rhetorical and fictitious harangues into the mouths of his principal actors. For the speeches which occur in Herodotus, who wrote before him, are more like conversation than formal harangues, and compared with these, deserve not the name of *speeches*.

The exactness of Thucydides, in observing chronological order, in his history of the events of a very various and complex scene of actions, obliges him to interrupt the thread of his narration in a method that is very painful and disagreeable to a reader. But notwithstanding this, his history is extremely interesting.

To complete the period of the history of  
which

which Thucydides treats, after his first book let the eleventh and twelfth of Diodorus Siculus be read, together with Plutarch's Themistocles, Aristides, Pausanias and Cimon, and the second and third books of Justin. And after the whole of Thucydides read the lives of Alcibiades, Chabrias, Thrasybulus, and Lyfias, written by Plutarch or Cornelius Nepos, the fourth and fifth books of Justin, and the first book of Orosius.

Next to Thucydides, let the first and second books of *Xenophon's history of Greece* be read. This completes the history of the Peloponnesian war, with the contemporary affairs of the Medes and Persians. After this let him proceed to the *expedition of Cyrus*, and the return of the Greeks; and lastly, the remainder of his history of Greece, which contains an account of the affairs of the Greeks and Persians to the battle of Mantinæa, which happened in the year 363 before Christ; so that all the historical books of Xenophon comprize a period of about forty-eight years.

Xenophon's history is properly that of his own times, and as he was the first general and philosopher, as well as best historian of  
his

his age, he had the best opportunity of being acquainted with, and the best capacity of judging of, every thing of which he writes. With regard to his country, he was in circumstances very similar to those of Thucydides, and he appears to be equally impartial. But he is much happier in the simplicity, as well as true elegance, of his style and manner. He seems to keep a medium between the loose excursive manner of Herodotus, and the extreme rigour of Thucydides, whose formal harangues he has likewise, in a great measure, dropped. But a barrenness of remarkable events in the history of Greece of which he treats, as well as the mangled state in which his works have come down to us, makes his history less engaging, and I believe less generally read, than either of the fore-mentioned authors. But his *Anabasis*, in which he relates the adventures of a body of ten thousand Greeks, under his own command, in their return to Greece from the very heart of the Persian empire, is highly engaging. As for his history of *Cyrus the Elder*, it has all the appearance of being composed with a view to exhibit the most perfect idea he could conceive of an accomplished prince,

both

both with respect to the arts of peace and war.

To complete the history of all that period of which Xenophon treats, read the lives of Lyfander, Agefilaus, Artaxerxes, Thrafybulus, Chabrias, Conon, and Datames, written by Plutarch, or Cornelius Nepos; the fourth, and fifth books of Justin, and the thirteenth, fourteenth, and part of the fifteenth of Diodorus Siculus.

After Xenophon's works read the remainder of the fifteenth, and the sixteenth book of *Diodorus Siculus*, which contain the histories of Greece and Persia from the battle of Mantinæa to the beginning of the reign of Alexander the Great, in the year 336 before Christ.

Diodorus flourished in the time of Julius Cæsar and Augustus. He spared no pains, or expence, in reading or travelling, to collect materials for an universal history, from the earliest account of things to his own times; and the small remains we have of it bear sufficient marks of his great labour and fidelity. But the merit of that part of his immense and valuable work which has come down to us, is that of a faithful compiler. For all the last books of his history are, in all probability,

irrecoverably lost; though there are some who pretend that they still may be extant in some obscure part of Sicily. Of forty books, of which the entire work consisted, the first five, which bring the history of the world to the Trojan war, are entire. The next five are wanting; but from the eleventh to the twentieth inclusive, the work is complete. The history of those two books of Diodorus will be more complete by reading the lives of Chabrias, Dion, Ephicrates, Timotheus, Phocion and Timoleon, written by Cornelius Nepos.

After these two books of Diodorus Siculus, read Arrian's history of Alexander. To make this history more complete read also Quintus Curtius, the tenth and eleventh books of Justin, and Plutarch's life of Alexander.

As great an encourager as Alexander the Great was of learned men, in an age which abounded with them, he has been so unfortunate, that none of the many histories of his exploits which were written by his contemporaries have reached our times; a misfortune which, it is remarkable, he shares in common with Augustus and Trajan, who were nearly in the same circumstances. The oldest  
of



of the histories of Alexander now extant are those of Quintus Curtius, and Arrian, who lived four hundred years after his death. The history of Arrian is an evident, and in all appearance, a faithful compilation from authors of the best authority, and who lived nearest the times of Alexander; particularly from the commentaries of Aristobulus and Ptolemy Lagus. He has so happily succeeded in a studied imitation of the style and manner of Xenophon, that he is often called the young Xenophon. There is also extant an history of India by this author. The least praise of Arrian, is that of an historian. His *Enchiridion*, which is a compendium of Epictetus's philosophy, has ever been acknowledged to be the most beautiful piece of ancient heathen morality.

The history of *Quintus Curtius* is, upon the whole, an agreeable performance; but there appears to be too great a display of oratory, an affectation of fine thoughts, shining expressions, and eloquent speeches upon every occasion, to make it thoroughly satisfactory as a history.

After Arrian read the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth books of Diodorus Siculus, which contain the history of Greece

from the year 323 before Christ to the year 301; and to complete this period read also the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth books of Justin, and the Demetrius and Eumenes of Plutarch.

After the above mentioned books of Diodorus, read from the sixteenth to the twenty-ninth book inclusive of *Justin*, which brings down the history to about the year 195 before Christ. Justin lived under Antoninus Pius about the year 150 after Christ. His history is only an *abridgment*, and as it were the *contents* of what must have been an immense and valuable work of *Trogus Pompeius*; being a complete universal history, from the earliest account of things to his own time, which was that of Augustus. Justin has drawn up his compendium with a great deal of propriety and elegance, and it is a very proper book to introduce young persons to the knowledge of history.

After the fore-mentioned books of Justin, read *Plutarch's lives* of Pyrrhus, Aratus, Agis, Cleomenes and Philopœmen.

The lives of illustrious men written by Plutarch, who flourished under the emperor Adrian, about the year 130 after Christ, make  
an

an excellent supplement to universal history. Being more a philosopher than an historian, his lives of illustrious men consist chiefly of such particular incidents as lead us to form the clearest idea of their tempers, characters, and views.

Cornelius Nepos, a writer of the Augustan age, who preceded Plutarch nearly in the same plan, exhibits an agreeable compendium of the chief transactions, and a clear view of the characters, of the principal heroes of ancient times, and, like Plutarch, is also usefully read by way of supplement to more regular histories.

To complete the history contained in those lives of Plutarch, read the fragments of Diodorus.

Lastly, in the regular order of history, read the thirtieth book of Justin, and all that follow till the two last, which completes the history of Greece, till it mixes with that of the Romans.

All the histories mentioned in this lecture are written in Greek, except those of Justin, Quintus Curtius, and Cornelius Nepos, which are in Latin.

## LECTURE XXII.

*Of Dionysius Halicarnassensis, Livy, Polybius,  
and Appian.*

As the authors of whom an account was given in the preceding lecture contain not only the history of Greece, but that of all the nations of the world that were known to the historians ; so the following course of *Roman history* must likewise be considered as comprehending all that is now to be learned of the subsequent ancient history of all other nations. Indeed, the connexions of the Romans were so extensive, that a complete history of their affairs could be nothing else than a history of the world ; at least of that part of it which is most worth our notice. In reality, we know nothing of the history of any ancient nations after the establishment of the Roman empire, but in consequence of their connexion with the Romans. The writers of the Roman history I shall give an account of in the order in which they are to be read, without any formal transition from one to another.

The writer who treats of the early part of  
the

the Roman history, in the fullest and most satisfactory manner, is *Dionysius of Halicarnassus*, an excellent rhetorician, as well as historian. He came to Rome in the reign of Augustus, and spent twenty-two years there, principally with a view to acquaint himself, from the source of information, with the antiquities and customs of the Romans. His entire work consisted of twenty books, and brought down the history of Rome as far as the beginning of the first Punic war. But, of these only the eleven first are now extant, and they end at the year of the city 412, before Christ 341, the time when the consuls resumed the chief authority in the Republic after the dissolution of the decemvirate.

This writer was furnished with all the lights that could be procured to conduct him through his undertaking, having the assistance of the most learned and eminent of the Romans in every thing in which they could be serviceable to him; and he is generally thought to have made the most of the authorities he could procure, in the great scarcity of ancient records which we have before observed to have been at Rome. But what we are most indebted to Dionysius for, is the description

he has given of the manners, customs, and laws of the Romans, as observed by himself, and which no Roman writers have mentioned. Indeed, such particulars as these we could not so reasonably expect from a native, writing for the use of his countrymen (who must have been as well acquainted with them as himself) as from a foreigner, writing for the use of foreigners, to whom every thing of that kind would be new and entertaining.

Notwithstanding Dionysius lived in an enlightened age, and he seems desirous to transmit nothing but well attested facts, he has not escaped the charge of the most egregious credulity in his account of some of the prodigies, with which all the Roman histories abound, particularly when he tells us, that, by the command of Nævius Actius the Augur, a razor cut a whetstone; that Castor and Pollux fought in person for the Romans against the Latins; that two rivers turned their course to favour the inhabitants of Cumæ; and that a statue of fortune spoke certain words twice over.

The style of this author, though his language be truly Attic, does not quite answer the expectations he naturally raises by his criticisms



ticisms on the style of other historians, and his rules for the proper style of history. For though his Attic phrases are allowed to be elegant, the best critics complain of a singularity, and a particular roughness, in the general turn of his sentences.

To complete the history of the period of which Dionysius treats, read Livy, book I. II. and III. Plutarch's Romulus, Numa Pompilius, Valerius Poplicola, Coriolanus, and Camillus.

After Dionysius, read from the fourth to the tenth book, inclusive, of Livy, which brings the history of Rome to the 451 of the building of the city, and 292 before Christ.

*Livy* was a native of Padua, but upon undertaking to write the Roman history (a work in which he was wholly employed for more than twenty-two years) he came, in the reign of Augustus, to live at Rome, for the convenience of having recourse to the most proper materials for his work, particularly those records which were preserved in the Capitol; and having collected every thing which he thought to his purpose, he retired to Naples, that he might prosecute his studies without interruption.

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All the time he was engaged in this work he lived a retired sedentary life. But though we never read either of his having ever travelled, or being employed in any command in the army, or any other department of public business, it is remarkable that this defect is not perceived in his history. His description of places is as exact as if he had visited them himself; and he describes a siege, and the arrangement of an army, with the greatest propriety and judgment. It is not improbable but he might be assisted in those parts of his work by persons who were better acquainted with the subjects of them than he himself could be. When he was at Rome, he enjoyed the favour of Augustus, who gave him every opportunity of furnishing himself with the knowledge necessary to his design.

The entire work of Livy consisted of one hundred and forty-two books; but of these only thirty-five are left, viz. the first, the third, the fourth, and half of the fifth decad; but the epitome of them all by another hand is extant.

All the ancients are unanimous in giving the most ample testimony to the noble and generous impartiality of this writer; who, though he lived in the reign of Augustus, had  
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the courage to do justice to the characters of Pompey, Cicero, Brutus, and Cassius. But, probably with a view to add to the solemnity of his history, he takes every opportunity of inserting accounts of omens and prodigies, and some, as they appear to us of the lowest and most ridiculous nature. Indeed, with respect both to the materials of his history, and the style and manner of composition, Livy seems to have studied grandeur and magnificence. With all the marks of real modesty, and greatness of mind, he every where preserves an uniform energy and majesty of style, to which the length and fulness of his periods does not a little contribute; and every part is as elaborate and highly finished as possible.

To supply the chasm between the tenth and twentieth books of Livy, read *Polybius*, particularly books first and second, which treat chiefly of the first Punic war; the epitome of the second decad of Livy, Justin, book seventeenth, eighteenth, twenty-second, and twenty-third, fourteen chapters of the fourth book of Orosius, the fourth and fifth of the third book of the *historia miscellanea* of Paulus Diaconus, Plutarch's Marcellus, and  
Fabius

Fabius Maximus; the second tome of the annals of Zonaras, and Appian's Punic and Illyrian wars.

Polybius was an Arcadian. He flourished in the year 216 before Christ, and was of the first note in his age as a soldier, statesman, and philosopher. He came to Rome on an embassy, and there became very intimate with Scipio Africanus the younger, and Lælius, whose inseparable companion he was in all their expeditions.

His history consisted originally of forty books, of which the eighth part only is remaining to us entire, and comprehends a space of fifty-three years, the greatest part of it employed in the history of those events of which he was an eye witness, and in the conduct of which he had a considerable share.

The pains which this writer took to inform himself of the things and places of which he writes was prodigious. He crossed the Alps, and traversed one part of Gaul, on purpose to represent truly Hannibal's passage in Italy; and fearing to omit the least circumstance of Scipio's actions, he travelled all over Spain, and stopped particularly at New Carthage, that he might carefully study the situation of it; and

and even used Scipio's authority to procure vessels to sail upon the Atlantic ocean, with some view to the history he was writing. He learned the Roman tongue, and obtained a perfect knowledge of their laws, their rites, their customs, and antiquities; and having gained permission from the senate to search the Capitol, he made himself familiar with their records, and translated them into his mother tongue.

However, though in a perfect acquaintance with his subject, and especially as a judge of every thing relating to it, he was superior to almost all other ancient historians, he is inferior to most of them in point of eloquence; and it appears not to have been without justice that Dionysius of Halicarnassus calls him unpolite, and reproaches him with negligence, both in the choice of his words, and the structure of his periods. His observations and reflections (which frequently interrupt the course of his narration, and take up great part of his work) appear tedious to those who are impatient to go on with the history, but are universally admired by the thoughtful and judicious.

*Orosius* was a Christian presbyter, who  
flourished

flourished about A. D. 416, and wrote seven books of history against the Pagans.

*Appian* was descended from one of the chief families of Alexandria. He came to Rome in the time of the emperor Trajan, where he practised the law, and distinguished himself so much as a pleader, that he was advanced to some office in the government; and by the succeeding emperors Adrian and Antoninus Pius, to the highest dignities of the empire.

Of the many works which he composed, there remain at this time but the least part, viz. his history of the Punic, Syrian, Parthian, Mithridatic, and Spanish wars, the fifth book of the civil wars, and those of Illyricum.

Whatever reflection it may be upon him as a man, it ought to be no objection with us to the history of Appian, that he has been suspected of copying a good deal from the Commentaries of Augustus, and other writers whose works are now lost; and this circumstance may have occasioned some little inequality in his style. This, however, is only what some critics pretend to have observed, and his style is allowed to be, upon the whole, very plain and suited to his subject. His  
method



method of preserving the transactions of every particular country distinct from those of every other is thought to have some advantages, and he is allowed to be particularly happy in his descriptions of battles, and in every respect to have given the greatest proof of his knowledge in the art of war.

After Appian, should be read the remainder of Livy, from the twenty-first book to the end, which brings the history to the year of the city 587, before Christ 166, and the epitome of Livy to the end.

To complete the last books of Livy, read Plutarch's Hannibal, Scipio Africanus, Quintus Flaminius, Paulus Æmilius, and Cato Major. After this read his Gracchi, Marius, Sylla, Cato Minor, Sertorius, Lucullus, Pompey, and Brutus.

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## LECTURE XXIII.

*Of Sallust, Cæsar, Hirtius, Dio Cassius, Paterculus, Suetonius, and Tacitus.*

THE reader of history must now proceed to *Sallust's* history of the war of Jugurtha,

which happened one hundred years before Christ, and of the conspiracy of Catiline, which happened sixty-two years before Christ.

Sallust was a Roman, descended of a family which had long made a figure in the equestrian order. He was a man of profligate morals, and the early part of his life was spent in the pursuits of ambition; but not succeeding in his attempts to be a leading man in the government of the state, he retired with a discontent which shows itself, both in the general severity of his language, and his frequent keen invectives against the times in which he lived. He was a great enemy of Cicero (whose wife Terentia he married after Cicero had divorced her) and the friend of Cæsar, who was a great admirer of him. By Cæsar he was entrusted with the command of some forces, and a province, in which, by his excessive rapaciousness, he grew so rich, that, upon his return, he purchased one of the noblest mansions in Rome, which to this day is called the gardens of Sallust.

The history of the war of Jugurtha, and of the Catilinarian conspiracy are all that we have left of this historian. Nothing at all is left of that excellent history which procured him

him the title of *the prince of historians*, except four orations and two epistles, collected by the ancient grammarians.

It is remarkable that, notwithstanding the profligacy of this writer's morals, and his particular attachments in life, those things seem to have laid no bias upon him as a writer. He does justice both to Cicero and Cæsar in his history of the Catilinarian conspiracy; and he is said to have taken uncommon pains to get well informed in the particulars of his history. With regard to the Punic wars in particular, we are told that he not only examined the memoirs and writings of those countries, but visited many places in person, to avoid mistakes in his descriptions.

Sallust falls far short of the majesty of Livy, but he is remarkably happy in a peculiar conciseness, fulness and energy of expression, for which he is said to have particularly studied Thucydides. His harangues are extremely elaborate, but much too long in proportion to the history, and they have every appearance of being purposely introduced to show his own eloquence on a variety of occasions.

A fondness for these set declamations has

strangely seized almost all the historians of antiquity who are famous for their style and manner of composition. It may perhaps be, in part, accounted for by considering that they were almost all educated pleaders; and that propriety of address on every occasion was so much studied by the Romans, that it was the constant exercise of youth at schools, as we learn from Juvenal, to make speeches for the heroes of history; and one great and happy example would occasion many imitations of that unnatural manner. It must be acknowledged, however, that they tend to make history much more interesting, by obliging the reader to dwell longer on the state of things in important situations.

*Julius Cæsar's Commentaries* of his own wars, and the supplements by Hirtius and others.

Julius Cæsar was a man who, by the arts of popularity, acquired great ascendancy over the people at Rome. Being entrusted with the command of an army in Gaul, he reduced all that country into subjection to the Romans, and by the same good fortune, and his own excellent conduct, he made himself master of the commonwealth; but fell a sacrifice

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to the spirit of liberty, which was not yet sufficiently quelled in that brave and high spirited people.

The title of Cæsar's *Commentaries* does not promise a regular and complete history of the wars of which they treat. But so masterly is the performance, that none of the ancients ever attempted to improve upon them. Though Cæsar is the hero of his own history, he always speaks of himself in the third person; and he gives an account of the prodigious success he met with, with the greatest delicacy, and with as much coolness and impartiality, as if he were writing the history of any other person.

In this Cæsar exactly resembles Xenophon. Indeed, there are few persons whose circumstances, and manner of writing, admit of a nearer comparison. They have the same advantage in the clearness of their descriptions of things relating to war from having been generals themselves. They have the same simplicity and ease in their style, and both are equally sparing in introducing set speeches. Of the two, Cæsar keeps nearer to nature and probability in this respect. Perhaps he might choose to style his work *Commentaries*, rather

than lay himself under a kind of necessity of swelling a regular *history*, with ornaments so unsuitable to a work which ought to be the exact copy of truth and real life.

Hirtius, who wrote some of the books which are generally joined with Cæsar, was a man intimately acquainted with the transactions of those times. After the death of Cæsar he was made consul, and together with his colleague Pansa died gloriously at the battle of Mutina, fighting against Antony. His style, and manner of composition, as well as the subject of his history, justly entitle him to a place next to Cæsar. The other pieces commonly annexed to Cæsar are greatly inferior to those.

To obtain a clear idea of the history of this important period of time, *Cicero's epistles*, especially those to Atticus, ought by no means to be overlooked. Cicero seldom departed from Rome, was a principal actor in all the great affairs transacted in his time; of which he writes almost an uninterrupted account to his friend Atticus, who lived a retired life, remote from all affairs of state. So great is the frankness of this writer, that we see the most secret motions of his heart, and how he  
was



was affected upon every emergence. He also shows us, as far as he himself was able to penetrate, the hearts of all those men who make so great a figure in the history of those times.

*Dio Cassius* was a native of Bithynia, whither also he retired to pass the conclusion of his life, after having been twice consul at Rome, and been intrusted with the government of several provinces under Alexander Severus, and several of the preceding emperors.

His history comprised all the time from the building of Rome to the reign of Alexander, which he wrote in eighty books, divided into eight decads, of which few are saved from that catastrophe which has been fatal to many admirable works of this nature, through the ignorance and incursions of barbarous nations. At present the thirty-fifth book is the first of those that remain entire. For we have only some fragments of the thirty-fourth. His progress to the sixtieth is complete enough, but instead of the last twenty we must be content with what Xiphilinus, a monk of Constantinople, who wrote in the year 1050 after Christ, has given us, in a compendium of them. That which we now have of this

author, comprehending the events of three hundred years at least, begins at the time when Lucullus had his great commands, and ends with the death of the emperor Claudius. We are as unfortunate with respect to this author as to Livy; since the history of the last forty years, of the transactions of which he was an eye witness, is entirely lost.

This writer has by no means avoided the charge of partiality, from his favouring the party of Cæsar and Antony, and his invective against Pompey and Cicero, particularly the latter, whom he treats in the most scurrilous and indecent manner; and perhaps it is not so much an argument of the prudent conduct of Dio, as of a criminal complaisance in him, that he could pass through such dangerous times as those of Commodus, Caracalla and Heliogabalus, without any risk of his life or fortune. But on the other hand, it is an argument in favour of his character, that he was esteemed by that excellent prince Alexander Severus, with whom he once had the honour of being consul, and under whom he published his history. This writer, however, has certainly fallen into a greater excess of superstition and credulity with respect to prodigies

gies and miracles than Livy. From Livy's manner of introducing those things it cannot at all be inferred that he believed them. He seems rather to have brought them in to add to the solemnity and dignity of his history; but they make a very different appearance in Dio. The speeches of this writer, which take up whole books, are insufferably tedious; but his style in general is rather admired than otherwise. He was a great imitator of Thucydides, and is not so obscure as he was.

The period of which Dio Cassius treats will be made more complete by *Velleius Paterculus*, who lived under Tiberius. He was a person of noble extraction, and had considerable employments in the Roman state. His work is an epitome of the Roman history to his own times, upon which he is more large; and he transmits to us several particulars which we should not otherwise have known. Excepting the gross flatteries of Tiberius and Sejanus, Paterculus's work is a faithful and elegant compendium of Roman history; but it is in several places imperfect. This writer excels in drawing characters; and if his work be thought too rhetorical, it must be acknow-

ledged that his rhetoric is more that of the gentleman than of the scholar.

*Suetonius's lives of the twelve Cæsars.* This author was a Roman born, had been employed in the army, and at the bar in the reign of Trajan; and under Adrian he was for some time what we may call secretary of state; but being obliged to quit his office, on account of some disgust which he had given to his master, he retired, and wrote the history he has left us. Indeed, his work can hardly be called a history; since, without any regard to chronological order, he has only thrown together such incidents in the lives of the twelve Cæsars, as he imagined would reflect the greatest light on their real characters, and has disposed them in an order which he thought best adapted to that purpose.

Suetonius has given us the most undoubted proofs of his diligence, veracity, and freedom, in the execution of his work. He is even thought to have entered too particularly into the detail of some unnatural vices. His expression is very clear, though concise: but no writer requires a greater knowledge of the manners, customs, and antiquities of Rome  
to

to make him intelligible; his mention of them and allusions to them are so frequent.

*Tacitus's Annals and History.* This author was a Roman, who was advanced regularly through all the honours of the state, till he was made consul under Nerva. He wrote annals of the public affairs in sixteen books, which begin at the death of Augustus Cæsar, and continue the story almost to the end of Nero. We have but part of them left; viz. the four first books, a small part of the fifth, all the sixth, from the eleventh to the fifteenth, and part of the sixteenth. The two last years of Nero, and part of the foregoing year, are wanting. These are the last books of the work. He has left us a *history* likewise, which extends from the beginning of the reign of Galba to the end of that of Domitian. There are also extant of this author, one book of the *Manners of the Germans*, and another of the *Life of Agricola*.

Tacitus is a most faithful, grave, and severe writer. Indeed, the subject of his history exhibits the most shocking spectacle of vice which the annals of mankind can show; in which case true history must necessarily

have all the keenness of satire. This history contains a fund of political knowledge, and on that account is very proper to be studied by princes and ministers of state.

Nothing can be more opposite than the style of Tacitus and that of Cæsar; yet each may be called excellent in their kind. Tacitus has not the beautiful simplicity and easy flow of Cæsar, but his language has equal precision and more force. He is not so easy to be understood, but he does not please less when he is understood. It is hardly credible that so much sentiment should be crowded into so small a compass as is done by Tacitus. Cæsar will perhaps have more charms for a young gentleman, but Tacitus will give more satisfaction to a person of age and experience.

Tacitus is the last Roman historian who is worth reading except barely for the sake of those *facts* which we have no other method of getting acquainted with. Indeed both Suetonius and Tacitus are generally placed in what is called the *silver age* of the Latin tongue; but all the succeeding writers are universally thrown into the *brazen* or *iron* age. I shall, therefore, content myself with a  
flighter



flighter mention of them, in the order in which they ought to be read, without distinguishing them into primary and secondary writers.

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## LECTURE XXIV.

*Of Aurelius Victor, Herodian, Scriptores Romani, Eutropius, Zozimus, Zonaras, Jordanes, Ammianus Marcellinus, Procopius, Agathias, Nicetas Acominatus, Nicephorus Gregoras, and Johannes Cantacuzenus. Use of Books of Antiquities. Writers who have explained Coins and Inscriptions. Use of a Knowledge of the Civil Law. Of modern Compilations of History. The Universal History. Hooke's Roman History.*

THE lives of Nerva and Trajan written by Aurelius Victor or Xiphilin. Aurelius Victor was a person of mean birth, but, on account of his learning and abilities, was advanced by Constantius, the son of Constantine the Great, to several considerable employments in the state. Among other works he wrote

wrote a history of the Cæsars, from Augustus down to Constantius his patron.

Spartians Adrian, and Capitolinus's Antoninus.

Herodian. This author was a Greek grammarian of Alexandria in the second century, but he spent most of his time at Rome in the court of the emperors, where he wrote his history. It consists of eight books, from the death of Antoninus Philosophus to Balbinus and Pupienus, in the year 238, which is the history of his own times.

Few authors have ever had a happier or more engaging manner of writing than this. He presents every scene with its causes and effects in the clearest and easiest point of view; and his style, without the least appearance of labour, has all the charms of simplicity and elegance.

After Herodian must be read what has not been already directed to out of the six following writers, commonly known by the name of *Scriptores Romani*, or *Historiæ Augustæ scriptores*, viz. Spartianus, Lampridius, Capitolinus, Vulcatius, Trebellius Pollio, and Vopiscus. They are published altogether by Casaubon and Salmasius. They all flourished  
about

about the time of Dioclesian, or Constantine, and their works are not easily distinguished from one another. But there is a chasm in these writers, between Gordian III. and Valentinian, which may be supplied from Aurelius Victor. By the help of this supplement, the above-mentioned writers bring down the history to the year of the city 1036, of Christ 283.

If any person would choose to see an epitome of the Roman history till about this time, *Eutropius* will furnish him with a pretty good one in Latin. He was an Italian sophist, and secretary to Constantine the Great, but more particularly trusted by Julian. By the express order of the emperor Valens he wrote a compendium of the Roman history to the death of Jovian, in the year of the city 1119, of Christ 366. All the writers of the Roman history from this time are Greek, except Ammianus Marcellinus.

*Zozimus* wrote the history of the declension of the empire in six books, beginning with Augustus, giving a fuller account of things from the reign of Dioclesian, and ending with the taking of Rome by the Goths under Alaric. In the first book he runs through all the first emperors to Dioclesian with great brevity;

vity; but in the other five books he gives a larger and fuller account. He lived in the time of Theodosius the younger, who began his reign in the year 507. Zozimus was a pagan, and therefore very often reflects upon the christian princes; notwithstanding which, his fidelity is not easily to be called in question.

*Zonaras* wrote a general history, from the beginning of the world to the death of the emperor Alexius Comnenus in the year 1119, in whose time he lived. He divided his work into three tomes. In the first he gives a brief history of the world from the creation to the destruction of Jerusalem; in the second he writes the Roman history from the building of Rome to Constantine the great, but very briefly; and in the third tome, he gives an account of the actions of all the christian emperors from Constantine the Great to the death of Alexius Comnenus.

This history and that of Zozimus will be made more complete by *Jornandes's* history of the successions of kingdoms and times, and his history of the Goths. He flourished about the year of Christ 540. He was himself a Goth, or an Alan, and, as he says, joined the Gothic historians with the Greek and Latin writers, in order to compile his history.

Ammianus

Ammianus Marcellinus flourished in the year of Christ 375, and was a soldier under Constantine and Julian. He wrote thirty-one books from the beginning of Nerva to the death of Valens, in whose court he lived: but of those the first thirteen have perished. In those which are extant he begins with Gallus Cæsar about the year of Christ 353, and largely describes the actions and lives of Constantius Cæsar, Julian, Jovian, Valentinian, and Valens. He was an eye witness of a great part of what he writes, and he brings the history to the year of Rome 1128, of Christ 378.

In the miscellaneous history of Paulus Diaconus, beginning with book xii. will be found a complete history from Valentinian to the deposition of Michael Curopalates, in the year of Christ 812, in which time this author lived.

Procopius flourished in the year 402, and wrote seven books of the Persian, Gothic, and Vandalic wars, undertaken by Justinian, and conducted by his general Belisarius.

Agathias lived about the year of Christ 567. He was a lawyer by profession, of Smyrna in Asia; he wrote five books of the reign and actions of Justinian, and begins his history where Procopius ended. He was a pagan.

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If any person choose to omit these last mentioned writers, and go on with the third tome of Zonaras, he may pass on from Zonaras to Nicetas Acominatus, or Chonites, who begins where Zonaras ends, and continues the history pretty largely for eighty-five years, to the taking of Constantinople by Baldwin the Flandrian, in the year of Christ 1203. This writer was born at Chonis, a town in Phrygia, from whence he took his name.

After Nicetas, follows Nicephorus Gregoras, who wrote a history of one hundred and forty-five years, from Theodorus Lascars the first to the death of Andronicus Paleologus the latter, in the year of Christ 1341, about which time he flourished.

But whereas the fidelity of this writer is called in question, particularly his history of Andronicus Paleologus, it may not be amiss to take in here Johannes Cantacuzenus, who of an emperor became a monk, and wrote an excellent history, under the title of Christodulus. This royal historian flourished about the year of Christ 1350. His history consists of six books, of which the two first treat of the reign of Andronicus, the remaining four of his own reign, and what he did after the death



death of Andronicus. He was made a monk in the year of Christ 1360, when he took the name of Josaaphus.

The conclusion of the history of Constantinople, with the rise and progress of the Turks, may be learned from Laonicus Chalcondiles, who put an end to it. He begins his history with Ottoman the son of Orthogul, who began to reign about the year of Christ 1300. His work consists of ten books, and brings the history to the year 1453, in which Constantinople was taken by Mahomet II.

That you may not be disappointed in your expectations from those historians who wrote after the removal of the seat of the empire from Rome to Constantinople, I must inform you that, as from that time the grandeur of the empire began to decline, the bounds of it to be contracted, and consequently the connexions of the Romans to be less extensive than before; the *Byzantine historians*, as those writers are called, are very much confined to the affairs of the empire and court of Constantinople, which for several centuries before the final dissolution of the empire was very inconsiderable. This part therefore of the preced-

ing course is by no means to be called *general* history, as the earlier part of it, but, on the contrary, like it is very much limited and particular.

Of all the modern *compilations*, derived from these sources of historical knowledge, none are so useful as those which treat of the manners, customs, and laws of the Greeks and Romans. The most complete body of Greek and Roman antiquities is that which has been collected from the united labours of all the best critics and antiquaries by Grævius and Gronovius. But this is an immensely voluminous work, which few persons can purchase, or peruse. A person may acquire knowledge enough of this kind for the purpose of reading the Greek and Latin historians in Potter's excellent and compendious system of Greek antiquities and in Kennet's antiquities of Rome; but without an acquaintance with these at least, a person will find himself greatly at a loss in reading the course, or any part of the course, of history recommended above.

Books which contain collections of coins and inscriptions should by no means be neglected by a person who is desirous of receiving

ing all the light he can get into the transactions of any period of past times. The principal collectors of these kinds of records are Gruter, Lipsius, Chishul, Montfaucon, Priedeaux, Mazochius, and Fleetwood, for inscriptions; and Spanheim, Ursinus, Patin, Vaillant, Hardouin, and Goltzcius, for coins.

With regard to the Roman history, no person can be a competent judge of many important things relating to it, who is not versed in the *civil law*, which contains the history of the domestic policy of that great people. Let every person therefore who proposes to study the Roman history by all means make himself master of *Justinian's Institutes* at least, which contain an authentic outline of their policy; and this indeed is sufficient for the purpose of reading their history.

It would be endless to enumerate all the modern compilations of ancient history. The most complete body of history ancient and modern is the *Universal*, and it is the more convenient for the study of history, as the references in it to original authors are very large and particular on every paragraph of it; so that it is at least a full index to universal history, and furnishes the reader with the

means both of enlarging the story, and correcting any mistakes the authors may have fallen into. The performance is certainly a very unequal one, with respect both to judgment and style, and the chronology of it is various, as might be expected from a work which could not have been completed at all but by a great number of hands. It is to be regretted that the chronological tables adapted to it are drawn up upon the old exploded system. But among a few instances of inaccuracy, there are numberless marks of the greatest labour and impartiality.

Of the compilers of the Roman history in particular, Hooke seems far preferable to any other in French or English. He has showed the greatest sagacity in tracing the rise, progress, and conduct of that people, and in penetrating into the characters of their principal heroes.

## LECTURE XXV.

*Of the Method of studying the English History. Original writers recommended. Gildas. Bede. Nennius. Hoel Dba's Laws. Geoffrey of Monmouth. Caradocus. Roman writers of English Affairs. Their Defects how supplied. Fulness of English History from the Time of Christianity accounted for. Saxon Recorders. Saxon Chronicle. Asser Menevensis. Ethelward. Verstegan. Sheringham. What Foreign Histories are useful to a Knowledge of the English Affairs in early Times. Of the Danish, Islandic, German, and Norwegian Antiquities.*

As the history of our own country is both more interesting to us, and, on every account, of the most consequence for us to be thoroughly acquainted with, I shall be more particular in my directions to acquire a thorough knowledge of it than I have been with respect to ancient history. To do this in as complete a manner as the bounds of my design will admit, I shall first deduce a regular series of *historians*, from the earliest account of our nation to

what may be called our own times, and then give some account of the *records* which our country affords of a different nature, but which a careful historian ought to avail himself of, and also of the places where it is said such records are to be met with. A great part of what I shall advance upon this last head in particular will be extracted from *Nicholson's English Historical Library*, to which I would refer those persons who are desirous of farther information with respect to the subject of this Lecture. I shall however so far depart from his method as to give all I have to say concerning the Britons, Saxons, and all the earlier part of our history, by itself.

Imperfect as what I have collected on this subject may be, it will at least suffice to give you an idea of what care, labour, and sagacity, are necessary to compile a good history of our country, from the vast variety of materials which it affords for that purpose; which will make us more sensible of the obligations we are under to those diligent historians and antiquarians who have taken the pains requisite for that purpose, and increase our contempt for those writers, who, without stirring from their closets, or perusing one an-  
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cient original author, assume the name of *historians*, and publish pompous accounts of their works; when they have done nothing more than republish, in a new, and perhaps no better form, the information that had been collected by others. Of these second and third hand compilers no nation perhaps furnishes a greater number than our own. If such works be recommended by greater symmetry in the arrangement of their parts, and a better style and manner of composition, it cannot be denied but that the authors of them have their merit; but then it is a merit of a different kind from that of the laborious investigators of historical truth, and ought not to be confounded with it.

I must admonish you, however, that you must not promise yourselves much entertainment from the language and style of the original historians of our nation. The bulk of our ancient histories are only to be considered as repositories of facts. It has only been of late years that history has been written with the least degree of elegance by the natives of this country; and even now we can show but very few masterly compositions of this kind; perhaps none which have united with the merit

of writers that of diligent investigators of historical truth. Indeed, these qualifications in modern times are rarely united, though in ancient times they often were.

The most ancient British historian now extant is *Gildas*. He was a monk of Bangor about the middle of the sixth century, a sorrowful spectator of the miseries, and almost utter ruin, of his countrymen the Britons, by a people under whose banners they expected protection and peace. His lamentable history *De excidio Britanniae* is all that is printed of his writing, and perhaps all that is any where extant.

Contemporary with Gildas was *Bede*, who was a Saxon; and though his history of the English nation is chiefly ecclesiastical, he has intermixed several particulars of the civil state of the Britons and Saxons.

The next British historian of note is *Nennius*, a monk, who flourished in the year 830. He is said to have left behind him several treatises, whereof all that is published is his *Historia Britonum*.

The next remains of the Britons, are *Hoel Dba's Laws*, which were enacted about the middle of the tenth century. Of these there  
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are several copies, both in Welch and Latin, still extant; among which is a very old one, written on parchment in Jesus College, at Oxford.

We are not to expect any such assistance for ascertaining the history of these times as after ages afford us from charters, letters patent, &c. It is very doubtful whether those times ever produced such materials for history; if they did, they have all perished. Neither can we expect any assistance from the medals, or coins, of the ancient Britons. The money used here in Cæsar's time was nothing more than iron rings, and shapeless pieces of brass; nor does it well appear that their kings did afterwards introduce any of another sort.

The first person that attempted the writing of the old British history after the conquest was *Jeffery*, archdeacon of Monmouth. This author lived under king Stephen, about the year 1150. He seems particularly fond of stories which have the air of romance, which led him to pitch upon king Arthur's feats of chivalry, and Merlin's prophecies, as proper subjects for his pen; but his most famous piece is his *Chronicon, sive historia Britonum*. In this he has given a genealogy of the kings  
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of Britain from the days of Brutus, the supposed son of Æneas, containing a catalogue of above seventy monarchs, who reigned in this island before Julius Cæsar landed in it. The first stone of this fabric was laid by Nennius, but the superstructure is this author's own. Notwithstanding this author has not been without his advocates, particularly the famous J. Leland, his history is now universally regarded in no other light than that of a romance.

Contemporary with this Jeffery was Caradocus, a monk of Lancarvan, who wrote a history of the petty kings of Wales after they were driven into that corner of the island by the Saxons. This history, which was written originally in Latin, and brought as low as the year 1156 by its author, was afterwards translated into English by Humphry Lluid, and enlarged and published by Dr. Powel, and again by W. Wyn, with a learned preface.

After king Charles's restoration Mr. R. Vaughan, a learned gentleman of Merionethshire, published his *British antiquities revived*, wherein are many curious remarks and discoveries. This author was well known to archbishop Usher, by whom he was much countenanced

countenanced and encouraged in these studies.

The Roman writers treat of the affairs of this island, both antecedent to their conquest of it, and during their stay in it, only occasionally. Cæsar may be depended upon for an authentic account of his own expedition, and the manner in which he was received by the natives; but it is certain he could have but little opportunity of being acquainted with the manners and customs of the people, or any thing relating to the internal state of the nation. As the Romans were afterwards better acquainted with the island, we have more reason to depend upon the little that we find of our history in Tacitus, Dio Cassius, Suetonius, Eutropius, and the *Scriptores Romani*, who may all be supposed to have had the perusal of such memorials as were from time to time sent to the emperors from their lieutenants in this province. A great deal of caution is necessary in reading some of the last-mentioned authors; but their defects are well supplied by the famous Mr. Dodwell, in his *Prælectiones Camdenianæ*, which will be highly serviceable to all persons who engage in these studies. Tacitus's life of Agricola has all the appearance



appearance of being a faithful account of that general's conduct in this island. He speaks of the natives with great impartiality.

Many defects in the Roman accounts have been supplied by inscriptions and coins, found in several parts of our island; and there are daily new discoveries of both. The Roman commanders in this island affected to celebrate their exploits on the reverses of their coins, whence may be collected several good illustrations of that part of our history. Those preserved in Camden's *Britannia* are very valuable.

We are much more happy with respect to the history of the Saxon times, particularly the end of them, than those preceding. It is remarked by all writers, that there is not in the world a history less obscure than that of England after the ninth century. Nor can we be at a loss to account for this, when we are informed by Matthew Paris, that there was a custom in England, that, in each mitred abbey of the order of St. Benedict, some persons of the fraternity, of ability and care, were appointed to register the most considerable events; and after the death of every king these different memoirs were laid before a  
chapter



chapter of the order, to be reduced to a body of history, which was preserved in their archives for the instruction of posterity.

We have likewise other remains of the Saxon times, which may be of great use to an historian. In several libraries, and in many register books of our oldest monasteries, we have many charters granted by our Saxon kings, but they are to be admitted with great caution. The records of the church of Canterbury assure us that Withered, who reigned about the year 700, was the first who gave out charters in writing, his predecessors thinking their bare word sufficient to secure any of their gifts and benefactions.

Many of the Saxon laws have been published. The first attempt of this kind was made by L. Nowel, who collected all he could find, and left them to be translated by his friend W. Lambard. Mr. Somner corrected the errors of Lambard, adding several laws omitted by him, and giving a double translation, in Latin and English, to the whole. And there have been some still later additions and improvements by other hands. There is not much to be learned from the coins of any of our Saxon kings; their silver ones being  
generally

generally of the same size, and very slovenly minted.

The oldest history of the Saxon affairs is the *Saxon Chronicle*, first published by Abraham Wheelock, who translated it, and caused it to be printed at the end of his Saxon Bede. The author, or authors, of this work are unknown. Some copies of it end with the year 977, another brings down the history to 1001, another to the year 1070, and another to 1154.

The earliest account we have of the reign of Alfred is that of *Afferius Menevensis*, who lived in his court, and is said to have been promoted by him to the bishoprick of Sherborn. This treatise was first published by archbishop Parker in the old Saxon character, at the end of his edition of Thomas Walsingham's history. Afferius wrote his sovereign's life no farther than the forty-fifth year of his age, which, according to his computation, fell in the year of our Lord 893; but the work is continued by other hands to the death of Alfred.

The next Saxon historian is *Ethelward*, or *Elward Patritius*, descended of the blood royal, who lived in the year 1090, but he

continued his chronicle of the Saxon kings no farther than Edgar. Indeed, the whole is said to be a translation of an imperfect copy of the Saxon chronicle, and in a very bad style.

Many things relating to the civil government of these times are dispersed in some particular lives of their saints and kings, particularly those of Offa, Oswin, Ethelwolf, and Edward the Confessor.

Of the later writers of the Saxon affairs, *Verflegan* must be first mentioned. His *restitution of decayed intelligence in antiquities* relates particularly to the language, religion, manners, and government, of the ancient English Saxons. This writer has fallen into many mistakes; but some of them have been noted by Mr. Sheringham, and the rest have been carefully corrected by Mr. Somner.

Mr. Selden was a person of vast industry, and his attainments in most parts of learning were so extraordinary, that every thing that came from him is highly admired; but Mr. Nicholson is by no means satisfied with the account he gives, in his *Analeſta*, of the religion, government, and revolutions of state among our Saxon ancestors.

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On the contrary, Mr. Nicholson says, that the best performance he knows of, relating to the prime antiquities of the Saxons, is Mr. *Sheringham's* treatise *De Anglorum gentis origine*. Our civil wars sent this author into the low countries, where he had an opportunity of becoming acquainted with Dr. Marham and the Dutch language, both inclining him to such studies as this book shows him to have delighted in. He appears to have been a person of great modesty, as well as industry and learning. His collections from the Greek, Roman, and particularly from the northern writers, are exceedingly valuable.

Our Saxon antiquary ought also to be skilled in the writings of those learned Germans who have made collections of their own laws, or have written such glossaries, or grammatical discourses, as may bring him acquainted with the many ancient dialects of our ancestors and kinsmen in that part of the world; particularly the *Sachsen Spiegel*, or *Speculum Saxonicum*, which is an excellent manual of the old laws of the ancient Saxons.

In order to understand the *Danish* period of our history, the Danish antiquities must be searched into, and the Runic character understood;

stood; for in this character the Danes registered all their more considerable transactions upon rocks, and stones hewn into various shapes and figures. On these they engraved such inscriptions as were proper for their heathen altars, triumphal arches, sepulchral monuments, and the genealogical histories of their ancestors. Their writings of less concern, as letters, almanacks, &c. were engraven upon wood; and because beech was the most plentiful in Denmark, and most commonly employed for those purposes, from the Danish name of that tree, which is *bog*, they, and all other northern nations, have the name of *book*.

Our Danish antiquary should also be acquainted with the best Islandic historians; the most ancient whereof is *Aras Frode*, contemporary with Sæmond, about the year 1114. He first wrote a regular history of Iceland from the first planting of his country down to his own time, whercin he gives an account of the affairs of Norway, Denmark, and England, intermixed with those of his own nation. Part of this work happily fell into the hands of Thomas Bartholine's friend, the bi-

shop of Skalholt, who took care to have it published in the year 1689.

There is likewise extant a couple of Norwegian histories of good credit which explain many particulars of the exploits relating to the Danish kings of Great Britain, which our own historians have either wholly omitted, or recorded imperfectly. The former of these was written soon after the year 1130, by one Theodoric, a monk. The other was compiled by *Snorro Sturlesonius*. Both drew their materials from the ballads of the *scaldri*, whose historical poems, it is generally thought, may be depended upon. Arngrim Jonas, who lived about those times, assures us that these *scaldri* were far from flattering, and knew nothing of the modern poetical fable. This book was translated into the vulgar English by Peter Undallensis, and published by Wormius.

Only two Danish historians, Mr. Nicholson says, are necessary to the English antiquary's library; namely *Saxo Grammaticus*, and his contemporary and fellow servant *Sveno Agonis*, of both which we have an excellent edition by Stephanus. Saxo is commonly



monly reckoned the most ancient, as well as the most polite, historian of Denmark, dying provost at the cathedral church at Roschild in the year 1204. Saxo himself says that he compiled his history out of the Icelandic ballads, and Sweno declares that he compiled his from the traditions of old people; yet the former is thought by Arngrim Jonas, and J. Lyf-cander, not to have made good use of his authorities.

The great restorer of the decayed antiquities of Denmark was *Olaus Wormius*, who has also enabled us to make many new discoveries in those of our own nation. His *Litteratura Runica* was the first happy attempt towards the right explanation of the old Cimbrian monuments, which till his time had lain neglected, and unknown to the learned world, not only in these northern kingdoms, but in several parts of Italy, Spain, and other European countries, where the Gothic arms and letters had gained a footing. His *Monumenta Danica* is also of singular use to a person who pretends to write upon any branch of our English antiquities; some of which are particularly illustrated by the author himself.

Thomas Bartholine, son to the famous physician of that name, has given us an addition to Wormius's discoveries.

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## LECTURE XXVI.

*The English History from the Conquest. Ingulphus of Croyland, Marianus Scotus. Florentius Bravonius, Eadmerus, William of Malmſbury, Simeon of Durham, Ealred, Henry of Huntingdon, William of Newbury. Gervase of Canterbury, Roger de Hoveden, Ralph de Diceto, Matthew Paris, Chronicle of Mailros, Thomas Wicks, Nicholas Trivet, Roger Cestrenſis, John Brompton, Walter of Hemmingford, Ralph Higden, John Vicar of Tinnmouth, Matthew of Westminster, Henry Knighton, Froiſſart, Thomas of Walsingham, William Caxton, and John Roſs.*

AFTER the conquest (as ſir William Temple obſerves), though the hiſtory of England was not for a long time written by one ſkilful hand, yet it is repreſented in ſo clear a light,

as leaves very little either obscure or uncertain in the history of our kingdom, or the succession of our kings; and for this advantage we are indebted to our monasteries. I shall only give an account of the principal of our historians since that period, and this as briefly as possible, ranking them in the several centuries wherein they wrote.

The first of our English historians after the conquest was *Ingulphus of Croyland*. He wrote the history of his monastery, and in it relates many things concerning the kings of England. He begins in the year of Christ 626, with Penda king of Mercia, and ends at the year 1089, which was the third year of William Rufus. This author was the son of a courtier of Edward the last king of the Saxon race. He was reckoned an excellent Aristotelian philosopher. He was counsellor to William duke of Normandy, and after the conquest of England was by him made abbot of Croyland. The relation this author bore to king William does manifestly bias him in the account he gives of Harold.

About the same time wrote *Marianus Scottus*, a monk of Mentz in Germany, who brought down our English history, inter-

woven with the more general one of Europe, as low as the year 1083. He was reckoned an elegant writer for the times, and his work met with such universal applause in our monasteries, that there was hardly one in the kingdom that wanted a copy of it, and some had several. The best and most complete manuscript of it is in the public library at Oxford.

The earliest history in the twelfth century was written by *Florentius Bravonius*, a monk of Worcester, who in many places of his work has almost transcribed Marianus, but he has added a great deal out of the Saxon chronicle, and other writers. His book ended with his life, in the year 1119; but it was continued fifty years farther by another monk of the same monastery.

*Eadmerus*, a monk of Canterbury, is our next historian, whose *historia novorum*, &c. was published by Mr. Selden, and contains the history of the two Williams, and Henry I. from the year 1066, to the year 1122. Mr. Nicholson says this work is of great gravity, and unquestionable authority. The intimate acquaintance the author had with archbishop Anselm did not bias him in favour of the clergy.

clergy. The character which Selden gives of him is that his style equals that of William of Malmſbury, and that his matter and composition exceed him.

*William of Malmſbury* has had the highest commendations imaginable given him by some of our best critics in English history. He wrote *De gestis regum Anglorum* in five books, with an appendix in two more, which he styles *novellæ historiæ*. In these we have a judicious collection of whatever he found on record touching the affairs of England, from the first arrival of the Saxons, concluding his work with the reign of king Stephen, to whom he shows himself to have been a hearty enemy.

*Simeon Dunelmensis*, and *Ealred* Abbot of Rievaulx are our next historians of note in this century. The former was monk and precentor of Durham in the year 1164, and may justly be reckoned one of the most learned men of his age. But his two books *De gestis regum* are not his master-pieces. His history begins at the death of Bede in 732, and ends in the year 1129. Abbot Ealred gives us a short genealogy of our kings to Henry II. but enlarges chiefly on the praises of David king of



Scots, founder of many abbeys of the Cistercians.

About the same time flourished *Henry Archdeacon of Huntingdon*, whose eight books, concluding with the reign of king Stephen, were published by sir Henry Savil. After Bede's time he has many particulars out of the Saxon chronicle, which had been omitted by our historians before him. He acknowledges, and very justly, that his history is very confused.

*William of Newberry* was so called from a monastery of that name, whereof he was a member. His history begins at the death of Henry I. and ends in the year 1097, though he is said to have been alive in the year 1120. He has with great keenness exposed the fables of Jeffrey of Monmouth, for which he is blamed by Leland.

The thirteenth century begins with *Gervase* a monk of Canterbury, who is reported to have been a most judicious antiquary, and methodical historian, and to have made an excellent collection of the British and English history from the coming in of the Trojans to the year 1200. All that is extant of his works begins with the year 1112, which was the twelfth year of Henry I. and ends with the



the death of Richard I. It is said to be done with great judgment.

Contemporary with these two, and, as Nicholson says, as great an historian as both of them joined together, was *Roger de Hoveden*, who seems to have been chaplain for some time to king Henry II. He has deduced our history to the year of Christ 1202, the fourth year of king John's reign.

The next historian of note is *Ralph de Diceto*, dean of London, who wrote about the year 1210. He composed two treatises, one called *abbreviationes chronicorum*, and the other *Imagines historiæ*. The former contains an abstract of our history, but chiefly of church affairs, down to the conquest. In the latter he gives the history of some of our kings more at length, ending with the first years of king John's reign. Selden is a great admirer of this author and his works.

Soon after these writers appeared *Matthew Paris*, a monk of St. Alban's, one of the most renowned historians of this kingdom. His *historia major* contains the annals at large of eight of our kings, from the beginning of the reign of William I. to the conclusion of that of Henry III. From the year 1259, in which

this author died, to the death of king Henry III. it was continued by William Rishanger, a monk of the same fraternity. The whole book shows a great deal of candour and exactness. It furnishes us with so particular a relation of the brave opposition made by many of our princes to the usurpations of the pope, that it is a wonder how such an heretical history came to survive thus long. The same author wrote an abstract of the fore-mentioned book, to which he gave the title of *chronica*, and which Lambord first called *historia minor*. It contains several particulars of note omitted in the larger history. The fairest copy of this book, supposed to be written by the author's own hand, is in the king's library at St. James's.

The *chronicle of Mailros*, though its title may seem to rank it among the records of another kingdom, may justly challenge a place among our English historians, since it chiefly insists upon the affairs of this nation. The abbot, or prior, of Dundranard in Galloway, a nursery under Mailros, is thought to have been the first compiler of this work; but it was afterwards continued by several hand down to the year 1270.

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The fourteenth century begins with *Thomas Wikes*. His history begins at the conquest and ends at the death of Henry I. in the year 1304. The author was canon regular of Osney near Oxford, and writes as clearly and fully, especially some passages relating to the wars of the barons, as so compendious a chronicle as his is would allow him to do; his style is elegant for the times.

*Nicholas Trivet*, son of sir Thomas Trivet, lord chief justice, was prior of a monastery of dominican friars in London, where he was buried in the year 1328. His history is in French, and bears the title of *Les gestes des apostoliques, empereurs, e rois*; an excellent copy of it is in Merton college at Oxford.

*Roger Cestrensis*, who was a benedictine monk of St. Werborges of Chester, was Trivet's contemporary, and wrote a large account of the affairs of this nation. His work he entitled *polychronicon temporum*, and began it at the coming in of the Romans. He continued it at first no farther than the year 1314, but afterwards added a supplement of sixteen years more. There are many manuscripts of this work in the Harleian library.

About the same time, as Mr. Seldon with  
probability

probability conjectures, lived the author of that chronicle which goes by the name of *John Brompton*, some time abbot of Joreval in the county of York, which begins with the coming in of Augustin the monk, in the year 528, and ends with the death of Richard I. in the year 1198. This author is particularly valuable for the collection, and version, which he has given us of the Saxon laws in Latin, made in the time of Edward III.

The chronicle of *Walter Hemmingford*, who flourished in the reign of Edward III. (whose reign he has more largely described) begins in the year 1066, and ends with the year 1308. He was a monk of Glastonbury, a person of great industry, and a very learned man for the times in which he lived.

*Ralph Higden*, a monk of St. Werburghs in Chester, wrote a history which he styles *polychronicon*, compiled chiefly from the writings of others, particularly from some ancient chronicles which are now wholly lost. He died very old, in the year 1377.

*John*, vicar of *Tinmouth*, and afterwards a monk of St. Alban's, in the year 1366, was a great collector of English histories, which he left digested in three very large volumes,

of

of which there are now fair copies in the libraries at Oxford, Lambeth, &c. They relate chiefly to the miracles of our English saints.

*Matthew*, a benedictine monk of *Westminster*, was a great collector of former historians, from which he is usually styled *florilegus*. His history ends at the year 1307, which it is not probable he long survived. The most eminent of his continuators was Adam Merimuth, canon regular of St. Paul's, and a great civilian. He begins his work at 1302, and his first part reaches only to 1343, but the second continues the history to the year 1380, in which it is probable he died.

*Henry Knighton*, one of the canons of Leicester, in this century, wrote a chronicle of *the events of England*, as he styles it. In his first book he gives us some account of the Saxon and Norman affairs, from the time of Edgar, who began his reign in 958, to William the Conqueror; and then he writes more largely to the year 1395, which was the nineteenth year of Richard II. in whose time he lived.

The fifteenth century was one of the most rude and illiterate ages. Among the few who were eminent for learning in it was sir *John Froissart*,



*Froissart*, some time canon and treasurer of Chimay in the diocese of Liege. His work contains indeed a general history of the affairs of France, Spain, and other parts of Europe; but he chiefly insists on those of this nation, and particularly the wars between the English and French from the year 1335 to 1400. This author was a Frenchman born, but was brought up in the court of king Edward III. and many years was familiarly conversant in that of Richard II. His account of things seems to be plain and honest, and perhaps no person gives a better account of the affairs of those two princes. He wrote in his own native language, which in his time was the court language in England.

Passing by a set of very ordinary writers, the next historian worthy of our notice is *Thomas Walsingham*, a benedictine monk of St. Alban's, and very probably regius professor of history in that monastery, about the year 1440. His short history begins at the conclusion of Henry III.'s reign, where Matthew Paris ends, and continues the history to the end of Henry V. His *Hypodigma Neustriæ* has a more particular regard to the affairs of Normandy, giving a full account of that dukedom,



dukedom, from the time that it first came into the hands of Rollo, down to the sixth year of Henry V. in which are many occurrences not elsewhere to be met with.

*William Caxton*, who was a menial servant for thirty years together to Margaret duchess of Burgundy (sister to our king Edward IV.) in Flanders, continued a history begun by the monks of St. Alban's, which commenced with the first inhabiting this island, to the last year of Edward IV. 1483. The whole work bears the title of *fructus temporum*. This author had certainly a good opportunity of being acquainted with the court transactions of his time.

*John Ross*, with the account of whom we shall close this century, was a man of good parts, and singular industry. He travelled over the greatest part of England, and made large collections out of the libraries where he came, relating to the history and antiquities of this kingdom. His history of our kings is still extant in the Cotton library, lately removed to the British museum. It contains many collections illustrating the antiquities of our universities.

## LECTURE XXVII.

*Robert Fabian, Polidore Virgil, Edward Hall, Hollingshead, Stow, Speed, Baker, Clarendon, Whitlocke, and Ludlow. Burnet, Rapin, Hume, Robertson. Parliamentary History. Grey's Debates. Use of private Letters, Memorials, and other Remains of Men in public Characters.*

THE first writer worthy of our notice in the sixteenth century is *Robert Fabian*, an eminent merchant, and some time sheriff of London, where he died in the year 1512. His *Historiarum Concordantiæ* consists of seven parts, of which the six first bring down the history from Brutus to William the Conqueror, and in the seventh he gives the history of our kings from the Conqueror to Henry VII. He is very particular in the affairs of London, many things concerning the government of that great city being noted by him, which are not to be met with any where else. He mixes all along, the French history with the English, but in different chapters. In the beginning of the seventh part he observes

serves Higden's method, of making his years commence at Michaelmas.

*Polydore Virgil* was the most accomplished writer, for elegance and clearness of style, that this age afforded. He wrote the history of our nation in Latin to Henry VIII. He was much acquainted with English affairs, but being a catholic, he gives a very unfair account of the reformation, and of the conduct of the protestants. His work however is necessary to supply a chasm of almost seventy years in our history, including particularly the lives of Edward IV. and Edward V. which period is hardly to be found in Latin in any other author.

*Edward Hall*, who was some time recorder of London, where he died in the year 1547, wrote a large account of the wars between the houses of York and Lancaster, which he dedicates to Henry VIII. If the reader desires to know what sort of clothes were worn in each king's reign, and how the fashions altered, this is the author for his purpose. In other respects his information is not very valuable.

The Chronicle written by *William Harrison* and *Ralph Hollingshead*, two obscure clergy-

men, was well received, and is still greatly esteemed. Hollingshead frequently owns the great assistance he had from Francis Thynne, some time Lancaster herald, and an eminent antiquary in the reign of queen Elizabeth. The second edition of this history was continued to the year 1586 by John Hooper, alias Vowel.

The first author we meet with in the seventeenth century is John Stow. He was a member of the merchant taylors' company in London. He travelled through a good part of England in search after manuscript historians, in the libraries of our cathedral churches, and was very exact and critical in his collections. Having spent above forty years in these studies, he was put upon the correction and publishing of *Reyne Wolf's Chronicle* by Archbishop Whitgift, and he had fairly transcribed his work, and made it ready for the press, when he died, in the year 1605. Upon his death the revising and continuation of his work was committed to Edward Hows, who says he bestowed thirty years in bringing it into that good order and method in which we now see it.

The chronicle of *John Speed* is the largest  
and

and best, says Mr. Nicholson, that is extant. It begins with the first inhabitants of the island, and ends with the union of the two kingdoms under king James, to whom it is dedicated.

The chronicle of *Richard Baker*, who died in the Fleet in the year 1644, met with very great success. The author himself wrote the history of our kings from the Romans down to the end of the reign of James I. and it was continued to the restoration by Edward Philip, who having the perusal of some of the duke of Albemarle's papers might have set that great revolution in its true light, had not ambition and flattery carried him beyond the truth, and his copy.

In latter times we have had no want of historians, at least of compilers of history. The misfortune is that too many of them have been misled by some favourite hypothesis, which they seem to have written to support. To pass by, therefore, such writers as sir Winston Churchill, Sandford, Brady, Tyrrel, Echard, Carte, and Guthrie, which are either said to fall under the former censure, or are too voluminous, or ill digested, to be read with much pleasure or improvement, I shall

give a short view of the more considerable that remain.

Clarendon, who accompanied Charles II. in his exile, who was afterwards his chancellor, and last of all discarded by him, wrote a full and pretty faithful history of the civil wars in the reign of Charles I. But as he is thought to adhere too much to the royal party, it will be necessary for the reader to compare his account of things with those of Whitlocke and Ludlow, who were of the opposite party; of whom the one was a zealous presbyterian and the other an independent; and who, on account of the rank and employments they bore under the commonwealth, had no less advantage than Clarendon of being well informed of what they wrote. Clarendon is the first Englishman who seems to have attempted to write history with any degree of dignity; and considering how bad a taste for composition prevailed at this time, his success was considerable. But the length of his periods, and his long and frequent parentheses are very tiresome.

Few writers have ever had a better opportunity of procuring information than bishop Burnet, and the *history* he has left us of *his*

own



*own times* is certainly a valuable work. But being a zealous advocate for the houses of Orange and Hanover, he is charged with great partiality, and perhaps not wholly without reason, by the party whose principles he opposed.

Of all the general histories of our nation till the revolution none are so full, and so impartial, as that written by *Rapin*, a Frenchman, who came over with king William from Holland, and after having served under him in Ireland, and travelled as tutor to some of our English nobility, retired again to Holland, where he spent twenty years in the composition of this excellent history. If this writer be thought tedious in some parts of his work, it is owing to his extreme care to omit no circumstance of any important transaction, and to his fidelity in keeping close to his authorities. The notes of Tindal, who translated this work, are an useful supplement to it, and a correction of it in several places. The same author has written a continuation of Rapin to the reign of George II.

A more entertaining history of the same period, and much superior in point of composition, is that of Mr. Hume. For a judi-

cious choice of materials, and a happy disposition of them, together with perspicuity of style in recording them, this writer was hardly ever exceeded; especially in the latter part of his work, which is by far the most elaborate. The earlier part of his history is too superficial. He has endeavoured to trace the progress of our constitution, and has descended more into the internal state of the nation, in exhibiting a view of the manners and sentiments of each age, the state of property and personal security, with the improvements in the conveniencies of life, than most other writers; but he has represented the ancient government as much more arbitrary than it really was, as will appear by the much more accurate accounts of Dr. Sullivan, and especially Mr. Millar, whose work on the English constitution I cannot too strongly recommend. Some great faults in Mr. Hume's history were well pointed out by Dr. Towers. Mr. Hume is also thought by many to have given too favourable an idea of the characters of our princes of the Stewart family, by omitting to mention those particulars in their conduct which have been most objected to; and it was probably with a view to exculpate them,

them, that he has taken so much pains to give the colour that he has done to the preceding periods of our history. A good antidote to what is unfavourable to liberty in Mr. Hume will be found in the very masterly history of Mrs. Macaulay. Though the style of Mr. Hume is, upon the whole, excellent, yet he has departed more than any other writer of the present age from the true English idiom, and leaned more to that of the French \*.

Dr. Robertson's history of Scotland throws great light upon the reign of queen Elizabeth, and in point of composition is not inferior to Hume.

A valuable treasure of materials for the constitutional history of England is contained in the *parliamentary history* lately published, and in the *journals* and debates in the house of Commons by various hands, among which those taken by Mr. Grey are the most valuable; relating to the times before and after the important period of the revolution.

\* This I pointed out in the *Notes and observations*, subjoined to my *English Grammar*. To a common friend he acknowledged the justness of my remarks, and promised to correct his style in future editions of his work; and I believe he has in a great measure done it.

It is in such large works as these, and the letters and journals of eminent men, who had a considerable share in the transactions of their times, as those of Melville, Henry lord Clarendon, and others, that we are transported as it were into those past times. These give us an insight into the manners and turn of thinking, which prevailed in them, and bring us intimately acquainted with the persons who made the greatest figure in them. Hereby we are enabled to enter into their sentiments and views, and have a clear idea of their peculiar character, temper, and manner. In such works as these the men themselves are seen acting and speaking; whereas in general history we are, at best, only told how they spoke and acted, which is a thing very different from the former. Of such books as these there has been no want since the introduction of printing into England, particularly from the reign of Henry VIII. so that a very satisfactory idea of our history from that time may be had by any person who will take the requisite pains for it.

## LECTURE XXVIII.

*Histories of particular Lives and Reigns. Of William the Conqueror by William of Poitiers. Of Edward II. by Thomas de la More. Of Henry V. by Titus Livius. Of Edward IV. by Haddington. Of Edward V. by Sir Thomas Moore. Of Henry VII. by Sir Francis Bacon. Of Henry VIII. by Lord Herbert of Cherbury. Edward VIth's own Diary. Of Elizabeth by Camden. Lives written by Harris and others.*

To the former writers of *general history*, or of the history of their own times, we shall find our account in adding those who have confined themselves to the history of *particular monarchs*; since from these, if not manifested under some prejudices, we may expect the fullest and most satisfactory accounts. I shall therefore subjoin a brief account of the most valuable writers of this class.

The life of William the Conqueror was written by *William of Poitiers*. Though he was a foreigner, and under some obligations to the king, he has acquitted himself with

great impartiality. There is also a short anonymous history of his reign published by Silas Taylor at the end of his treatise of Gavelkind. This writer lived in the reign of Henry I. so that he might be sufficiently informed of the truth of all that he relates. But sir William Temple has given us the most excellent and judicious account of this king's reign and policy.

King Stephen's memoirs were collected by *Richard Prior of Hexham*, and are printed among the *decem scriptores*.

The history of Henry II. has of late been very elaborately written by lord Littleton.

The expedition of Richard I. into the Holy Land was celebrated by *Joseph Iscanus*, in a poem intitled *Antiocheis*. It is in heroic verse, and in a style much superior to what might be expected from his age. This author was one who accompanied his hero into the Holy Land.

The life of Edward II. was accurately written by *sir Thomas De la More*, who was knighted by Edward I. was counsellor of Edward II. and lived to the beginning of the more prosperous reign of Edward III. It was first translated from French into Latin by



Walter Baker, a canon of Osney, near Oxford, and has frequently been published in English. Sir Henry Cary has also written the history of this unfortunate prince, with political observations on him, and his unhappy favourites Gaveston and Spencer.

The life of Henry V. was written at large by one who called himself *Titus Livius*, and under that name dedicated it to Henry VI. We have two good copies of this work, one in sir John Cotton's library, the other in that of Bennet College.

The life of Edward IV. has been written by *Mr. Haddington*, as well as could be expected from one who lived at so great a distance from him.

The short and lamentable history of Edward V. was largely and elegantly described by the famous *sir Thomas More*, lord chancellor of England, who also began, but did not finish, the history of Richard III.

The history of Henry VII. has been written in an excellent manner by sir Francis Bacon. He has entered as it were into all his councils, has largely described every thing of importance, and dwelt upon nothing trivial.

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The history of Henry VIII. has been written by Edward lord Herbert of Cherbury, with almost as much reputation as lord chancellor Bacon gained by that of Henry VII. This author, however, has dwelt chiefly on affairs of war and policy, and has not entered far into the ecclesiastical history of that reign, which is nevertheless the most important and interesting.

The most considerable transactions of the reign of Edward VI. are well registered by the young king himself, in the diary written by his own hand, which is still preserved in the Cotton library, from which bishop Burnet transcribed and published it.

The long and prosperous reign of queen Elizabeth was written by Mr. Camden, by the special direction and command of lord Cecil. It has gone through several editions, and in several languages, though it is pity, Nicholson says, it should be read in any other than its author's polite original Latin. The same reign has likewise been written lately by Mr. Birch.

The history of the last century has been very much illustrated by several single lives  
lately.

lately published, particularly those of James I. Charles I. and Oliver Cromwell, by Mr. Harris, in the way of *text and notes*, after the manner of Boyle\*.

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## LECTURE XXIX.

*Light thrown upon the Civil History of England by the ecclesiastical Writers. Odericus Vitalis, &c. Burnet's History of the Reformation. Cranmer's Memorials published by Strype. An Acquaintance with the old English Law-books useful to an English Historian. Coustumier de Normandy. Glanville, Bracton, Fleta, Hengham, Horn's Mirroir de Justice, Breton, Novæ Narrationes, Fortescue de Laudibus Legum Angliæ, Statham's Abridgment of Reports, Littleton and Coke, Doctor and Student, Fitzherbert de Natura Breviarum. Year Books, Reports, &c. Wood's Institute.*

IN order to obtain a complete knowledge of the political affairs of this nation, it will be

\* As histories of particular reigns and lives are continually multiplying, I leave this lecture a short one, to give room for an account of them.

necessary ]

necessary to attend to the *Ecclesiastical History* of it; particularly as before and during the reformation, the affairs of the church and state were so intimately united, that no writer can give a complete idea of either of them separately. Even those writers who confined themselves the most to ecclesiastical matters never fail to introduce a good deal of political history. Thus Odericus Vitalis, who wrote thirteen books of church history, in his first and second books treats pretty largely of the military actions of the Normans, in France, England, and Apulia, to the year 1141, about which time he lived.

Of ecclesiastical historians there has been no failure since the first introduction of christianity into this island, quite down to the reformation. Of these some have written general ecclesiastical history, others the particular histories of certain bishoprics and bishops, of particular orders of monks and saints; but for these I refer you to Nicholson, who has treated very largely of all the most considerable of them; it not being my business to take notice of church history, any farther than it is necessarily connected with civil. In this view, however, I must not fail to mention *Burnet's History*

*History of the Reformation.* For never were the affairs of church and state so intimately connected as during that period. This historian gives us a particular account of all the affairs of the reformation, from its first beginning in the reign of Henry VIII. till it was finally settled and completed by queen Elizabeth in the year 1559. The collection of records which he gives in the conclusion of each volume supplies good vouchers of the truth of all he advances in the body of his history, and are much more perfect than could reasonably be expected, after the pains taken in queen Mary's time to suppress every thing that carried the marks of the reformation upon it.

The *Memorials of Archbishop Cranmer* have been published by Strype, who has adhered to Burnet's method, giving his own historical account in three books; the first of which ends at the death of Henry VIII. the second at the death of Edward IV. and the third at that of Cranmer himself. In the conclusion there is a good collection of *records*, among which are several authentic letters, and other papers of value then first made public.

Of all the books not directly historical, none  
are

are of such immediate use, for the most valuable purposes of history, as LAW BOOKS. In these we may trace both the greater and more minute changes in the internal constitution of the nation, with innumerable other important articles of which general historians take but little notice. I shall therefore give a brief account of all our most ancient law books, nearly in the order in which they were written.

The first book of laws which draws our attention is that which is entitled *Coustumier de Normandy*, and would do much more so, if it were, as some have imagined, an ancient formulary drawn up by the first princes of that country, and brought in hither by the conqueror. But though it contains many particulars which prove it not to be of so great antiquity, it would still be of considerable value, if it were compiled, as the author himself hints, forty years after the accession of king Richard. There are in it many of the laws of Edward the Confessor, and other Saxon kings, but mixed with Norman customs that are no way related to them. Though a great part of this compilation is very ancient, several paragraphs are translated almost *verbatim*  
out



out of Glanville; yet some of his courts of justice, original writs, &c. are not so much as named in it.

The next author is *Rainulph de Glanville*, who was chief justice in the reign of Henry II. The book that now bears his name (though there have been some disputes about the author of it) was first published by the persuasion and procurement of sir William Stamford, and has since had several editions. Its title is *Tractatus de Legibus et Consuetudinibus Regni Angliæ, &c.* It is divided into fourteen books, each of which relates to a distinct division of the law, as it stood in his time; and in all these he gives the forms of such *writs* as were then, and are mostly still in use, upon all the several occasions that are treated of.

John Bracton, the author of a treatise which goes by his name, was judge itinerant in the latter end of the reign of Henry III. and the beginning of Edward I. This truly venerable code of our ancient common law consists of five books, which begin with the several legal ways of procuring property, and proceed to those of the just maintaining or recovering it. This method is very conformable to that

of the emperor Justinian, whose laws are also sometimes quoted as familiarly as if they were part of the known common law of this kingdom. On every head this author intersperses a register of proper writs, and reports of adjudged cases in both benches, as also of such as had been tried before the judges in eyre, assize, &c.

The author of that methodical and learned treatise which bears the name of *Fleta*, wrote in the reign of one of the Edwards, most probably the second or third. In his first book he insists chiefly upon the pleas of the crown, in the second he gives a most full and curious account of all the affairs of the king's household, with many other particulars that greatly illustrate the history of those times; and in the four following he shows the practice of our courts of judicature, the forms of writs, explication of law terms, &c. He sometimes transcribes the very words of Bracton, and sometimes has the same things that we find in one of Bracton's epitomizers, Gilbert de Thornton.

The last mentioned writer modelled his abstract of the common law as he thought would be most useful in explaining acts of parliament.

ment. He frequently quits Bracton's method, and makes use of one which looks more confused.

Sir Ralph de Hengham was chief justice of the king's bench and of the common pleas in the reign of Edward I. His *Summas* have always past under the titles of *Hingham magna*, and *parva*, and have both the same common subject, treating of the ancient and now obsolete forms of pleading in *essoins* and defaults. They were long since translated into English; but that being done in the language of Edward II.'s or III.'s time, it was thought most advisable to print them in their original Latin. This was done by Mr. Selden, who published them with Fortescue, adding a few notes of his own in English.

Besides these, there were many more treatises on matters of law, written in the time of Edward I. wherein the practice of the bar began first to flourish; but not being much conducive to the purpose of history, the mention of them is omitted in this place.

Andrew Horn, the author of the *Mirroir de Justice*, lived in the reign of Edward II. His design was to give the judges of his time a view of what they should have been, and

what they were. He frequently quotes the rolls of the Saxon times, and even their very *year books*, which are now vanished; which shows that we have lost many of our best helps to the knowledge of the history of those ages. He pretends to have perused all the laws of this island ever since the reign of king Arthur. The English edition differs very much from the French, and yet the translator pretends that he kept close to the words and meaning of his author.

That excellent French manual of our laws which bears the name of *Briton*, Mr. Nicholson thinks was written by that John Breton, whom we find one of the king's justices together with Ralph and Roger de Hengham, in the first year of Edward II. Wingate's edition is justly commended for the care and judgment of the publisher; such various readings being added in the appendix as serve very much to supply the defects of the former impression. The language is the true old French of the thirteenth century, as appears from the authentic instruments of those days, and differs considerably from that of Littleton in the fifteenth. The whole book runs in the name and style of the king himself, as a summary  
of

of all the laws then in force within the kingdom of England and dominion of Ireland.

It is generally agreed that the art of pleading was brought to its perfection in the reign of Edward III. when the little manual of entries which bears the name of *Novæ Narrationes* was first collected and published. It gives us such forms of courts, declarations, defensors, pleas, &c. as were then in use. To which are added the *articuli ad novas narrationes*, being a commentary or some short rules upon them. But all these are few and defective in comparison with what we have in those books of entries which are the work of later times, the chief whereof are those by *William Rastal*, *sir Edward Coke*, and *sir Humphry Winch*.

Sir John Fortescue was chief justice of the king's bench during half the reign of Henry VI. In his book, which is entitled *De Laudibus Legum Angliæ*, and which is written by way of dialogue between the prince and himself, he proves that all kings are under obligation to be conversant in the laws of their own realms; that our laws are not alterable at the sole will of our monarchs; that our constitution, or common law, is the most reasonable, as well

as the most ancient in Europe, and more equitable in many things, in which he instances, than even the civil law, or the laws of neighbouring nations, and that our kings are greater and more potent in the liberties and properties of their own people, than arbitrary tyrants in the vassalage of their slaves. This book was first translated and published, together with its English version, by R. Mulcaster, and was afterwards revised and improved with a few cursory notes, by Mr. Selden.

Nicholas Statham, one of the barons of the exchequer in the time of Edward IV. was the first who reduced the larger arguments and tedious reports of the year books into a short system under proper heads and common places, which he did as low as the reign of Henry VI. His example has been followed by many other persons.

Sir Thomas Littleton was one of the justices of common pleas in the reign of Edward IV. His *book of Tenures* is studied by every body who pretends to any acquaintance with the municipal law of this kingdom, and has been more frequently printed than any other law book whatever; though many particulars of his common law are altered by acts of parliament,



liament, and others are difused and grown obfolete. Sir Edward Coke fays that this is the moft perfect and abfolute work that ever was written in any human fcience. The firft volume of *Coke's Institutes* is only a tranflation and comment upon this book. Sir Edward's *Complete Copyholder*, may alfo be read as a fecond commentary on Littleton's tenures; and together with thefe, it will be highly convenient to perufe fir Henry Spelman's treatife on the original growth, propagation, and condition of lands and tenures by knight's fervice in England.

The dialogue in two parts, which goes by the name of the *Doctor and Student*, was written by one Christopher St. Germain, barrifter of the Inner Temple, who died in the year 1540. The design of the book was to enquire into the grounds and reafons of the common law of England, and to fhew how confiftent every one of its precepts is with right reafon and a good confcience.

Sir Anthony Fitzherbert was one of the juftices of the common pleas in the reign of Henry VIII. and was author of the *New Natura brevium*, which was carefully reviewed by William Raftal, who added a table and

some other proper ornaments to what its excellent author seems to have left unfinished.

There were ten volumes of the *year books* printed by subscription in the year 1679. These began with the reign of Edward III. and ended with that of the reign of Henry VIII. To these were afterwards added the cases adjudged in the time of Edward II. collected by serjeant Mainard, out of several ancient manuscripts.

Anciently judgments at the common law were recorded with the reasons and causes of such judgments, and the custom was continued during the whole reign of Edward I. and a great part of that of Edward II. But this custom ceased in Edward III.'s time, when causes were numerous, and the practice of the law was brought to its full perfection. Hence arose the trouble of those *reporters of cases*, who from the beginning of that reign have supplied the defects of the records, and not only afford us, as these do, the final determination of the judges in each case, but also the intermediate reasonings and debates on which such judgment was founded. The authors of these reports are very numerous, and are daily increasing.

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The preceding writers are necessary to be studied by a person who would enter minutely into the state of the kingdom with respect to those things to which they relate; but a person may understand our general historians very well if he be master of *Blackstone's Commentaries*, for the present state of the law, Sullivan's Lectures, and Dalrymple on feudal property, together with some of lord Kames's law tracts, for the ancient state of it, and the capital changes it has undergone to the present time. Jacob's Law Dictionary is likewise a very useful book to be consulted occasionally, in reading a course of English history; as also Brady's Glossary, subjoined to his Introduction to the old English History. But without some knowledge of the English law, it can be but a very lame and imperfect idea that any person can get of the English history.

## LECTURE XXX.

*Of the English Records. Royal Proclamations. Dispatches and Instructions for foreign Ministers. Leagues, Treaties, Memorials, &c. where to be found. Records of the Old Court of Chivalry. Agard's Collections. Cotton's Library. Records of Foreign States. Rymer's Fœdera. The Green Cloth. Acts of Parliament. Rastal's Collection. Prynne's Abridgment, and others. Journals of both Houses. Summons of the Nobility in Dugdale. Records in the Courts of Westminster. Disposition of the Records in the Tower.*

FROM books and writings which have been published, I proceed to give some account of the various kinds of *records* which our country affords, and which a diligent historian may greatly avail himself of. Of these records, some or other are daily published, but many are of such a nature that we can never expect there will be any other than single copies of them extant; or at most but a few copies of each. These therefore cannot be consulted without having recourse to the places

places where they are preserved, of which I shall give the best information I can collect from Nicholson and other writers.

To preserve as much distinctness as possible in this account, I shall first give an account of those records which are preserved within the verge of the king's Court and Palace Royal; secondly, of those which relate to the two houses of parliament; thirdly, those of the courts of Westminster, &c.; and lastly, those of an ecclesiastical nature. Articles of less note will be introduced occasionally, where the mention of them will appear the most natural.

The society of antiquaries projected by sir Robert Cotton, Mr. Camden, and others, took particular care to make it one of the rules and statutes of their community, that all the *proclamations* of our kings and queens should be preserved in their library. These are the more valuable, because general historians, although they take notice of what is commanded or prohibited by royal authority, seldom give us the reasons of such public edicts, which are always expressed in the instrument itself, and are much more valuable  
than

than it, as they often contain a good part of the history of the times.

Charters, and letters patent, making grants of privileges, offices, and pensions, are at this day enrolled in chancery; but as they formerly took their rise at the king's Court of Residence, they are to be looked for in the paper office.

To distinguish those that are truly ancient and genuine from such as are counterfeit, it will be requisite to be perfectly well skilled in the several changes that have been made in the kings seals and titles, of which Nicholson gives a particular account. For ancient and modern precedents of characters consult Shepherd's treatise of corporations, fraternities, and gilds.

Occasional proclamations with all dispatches and instructions for foreign ministers, letters of intelligence, and other public papers which are communicated to the two secretaries of state, are transmitted to the *paper office*, wherein they are all disposed by way of library, in a place of good security and convenience within the king's Royal Palace at Whitehall. There are likewise the credentials of ambassadors, the  
letters



letters of foreign princes and states, leagues, treaties, memorials, &c. Of what great use to any historian a free access to this treasure may be, appears from Burnet's history of the Reformation. Besides these assistances, the inquisitive historian will here find a great variety of papers relating to the decrees and transactions of several of our ancient as well as modern palace courts.

The court of chivalry has been long discontinued, but some of its records that relate to the proceedings in the Marshalsea are still in the Paper-office. There is however little in them to an historian's purpose. What is most considerable in this rich treasure is the vast collection we here meet with of memorials, instructions, plenipotentiary powers, granted in several reigns and on several occasions to our ambassadors and envoys, or papers of the like kind presented by the ministers of foreign princes and states residing in England. That great light in history may be had from these is evident from *Diggs's complete Ambassador*, the history of sir Thomas Randolph's embassy to the emperor of Russia, and many other works.

In the Receipt-office in the Exchequer there

there is a short collection of all leagues, treaties of peace, intercourses and marriages with foreign nations, compiled by the industrious antiquary Agard; but this falls infinitely short of that immense store which sir John Cotton's library will afford of these matters. We have there no less than forty-three volumes of treaties between the English, Scotch, and French, in a fair and regular method, besides many more of the like kind in a more loose and dispersed condition.

Nor are the memoirs of our own ambassadors only of great use to an English historian; those of our neighbouring nations are no less so; those especially with which this kingdom has maintained the greatest correspondence in treaties of peace and commerce; as France and Holland, from which countries we are often obliged to fetch our information in some articles, concerning which our own historians afford us no satisfaction. The like may be said of Denmark, Sweden, &c. whenever we find our own affairs interwoven with those of other countries. This want is in part supplied by *Rymer's Fœdera*, an immense work, undertaken by the command, and at the expence of queen Anne. It contains not only

finished treaties, but letters of great princes, and their chief ministers of state, instructions to ambassadors, and other ministers residing in foreign courts, Papal bulls of all kinds, congé d'elires, and of restitution of temporalities, royal mandates to the clergy for commemorative masses, fasts, and thanksgivings, &c. sculptures of ancient hands and seals, and many other curious pieces of antiquity,

There is another repository of court records which is commonly known by the name of the *green cloth*. In this office are not only preserved the accounts of the king's household expences, but also such orders as have from time to time been given by the lord steward, chamberlain, comptroller, &c. for the more regular behaviour of the inferior servants. There likewise (and not in Chancery) were commonly inrolled all letters and writings concerning such matters of state as were not fit to be made public.

A collection of the *laws* before Magna Charta was made by sir Henry Spelman, and is now among the many choice manuscripts in the Bodleian library.

Acts of parliament often give hints of the  
manners

manners and customs which prevailed at the time of their being enacted, so that many parts of our history may be recovered from them; especially if compared with the writers either in divinity or morality about the same date. Thus the statute against the multiplication of metals shows the attention which was given to chemical experiments in order to discover the philosopher's stone; and Chaucer's tale of the cannon yeomen confirms the same fact.

The putting of marginal notes to the statutes at large was first begun by William Raftal, who collected all in force from Magna Charta to the fourth year of Philip and Mary. These collections have been carried on by different hands to the present time. But since these collections are in many respects deficient, the diligent historian will be obliged to have recourse to the original records.

Before the use of printing, and till the reign of Henry VII. the statutes were all engrossed on parchment, and proclaimed openly in every county; but this custom has since been discontinued. In these parliamentary rolls are many decisions of difficult points in  
8 law,

law, in which we have not only the final resolution and judgment of the court, but also the reasons of it.

An exact abridgment of as many of the parliamentary records as were to be had in the Tower of London, from the reign of Edward II. to that of Richard III. was made by sir Robert Cotton, and published by William Prynne. There is a fair transcript of those from the first of Edward III. to the forty-third of queen Elizabeth in the Cotton library, where there are also two volumes of indexes to the Tower records.

The last sort of parliamentary records are the journals of the lords and commons, wherein every vote that passes is carefully registered by the clerks of the several houses. A complete journal of the transactions of both houses, from the first of Henry VIII. to the seventh of Edward VI. was drawn up by Robert Boyer, and is now in the Cotton library; but the surest fountain is that of the original records themselves in the Tower and Parliament-office. These journals have lately been printed.

Sir William Dugdale has given us a perfect copy of all the summonses of the nobility to

all the great councils and parliaments of this realm, from the forty-ninth of Henry III. to the present times, wherein we likewise find the like mandates to the clergy and commons.

The records of the king's courts at Westminster are first deposited in the chapel at the rolls, and as that grows full and overstocked, they are removed to the Tower; where, in two several apartments, they are methodically arranged according to their various kinds and uses. In Wakefield Tower are the enrolments of leagues and treaties with foreign princes, the original laws as they passed the royal assent, authentic memoirs of the English achievements in France and other nations, forms of homage from the kings of Scotland, the establishment and laws of Ireland, liberties, and privileges granted to cities, corporations, and private subjects, tenures and surveys of lands and manures, inspeximus of charters and deeds, made before and soon after the Norman conquest, boundaries of all the forests in England, &c. In short, we have here, according to the petition of the commons in parliament, *the perpetual evidence of every man's right*, without which no story of  
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the nation (to use Dr. Chamberlain's words) can be written or proved. In Julius Cæsar's chapel in the White Tower there is another vast collection of records, out of which the indefatigable William Prynne collected his four large volumes. Any of these may be seen and perused by those who have occasion to consult them, there being a person appointed to attend for that purpose, eight hours every day in summer, and six in winter.

In the records of the court of King's-bench we are to look for all judgments upon notorious treasons, breaches of the peace, &c. as also for the like upon common pleas, by bill for debt, covenant, promise, &c. against the immediate officers of the King's court. The public records of this court, as well as those of the Common Pleas, preceding the first year of Henry VI. are in the chapter-house of the church of Westminster; but those of that year and downwards are kept in the upper treasury, adjoining to Westminster-hall; such only excepted as are of daily use, and not above ten years old, which are in the custody of the clerks in the lower treasury.

## LECTURE XXXI.

*The petty Bag-office. The Master of the Rolls. Registrum de Cancellaria. Lower Exchequer. The Pipe-office. The several Remembrancers. Doomsday Book. The red Book of the Exchequer. The black Book. Testa Nevilli. Records of the inferior Courts. Those kept by the Secretary of the Admiralty. The Office of Ordnance. The Libraries and Museums of Noblemen and private Gentlemen. Use of the British Museum. What Records have been published. Formulæ Anglicanum. Pedigrees of ancient Families. Old Accounts of Expences and Disbursements in Families. Ledger Book, and other Domestic Records. Monasticum Anglicanum by Dugdale. Notitia Monastica by Tanner. University Monuments. Historiola Oxoniensis. Wood's History and Antiquities of Oxford. Black Book of Cambridge. Lives of English Writers by Leland and others. Registers in Ecclesiastical Courts.*

THE records of that court of Chancery wherein the process runs *secundum legem et consuetudinem Angliæ* are filed up in the *petty bag-office*. The chief clerk of this court is  
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the master of the Rolls. In his keeping are the enrolments of all letters patent, treaties, and leagues, deeds, and purchases, recognizances, commissions of appeal,oyer and terminer, &c. ever since the beginning of the reign of Henry VII. the rest having been transmitted to the Tower. Most of the Chancery records were destroyed by the rebels under Wat Tyler in the time of Richard II.

There are several repositories of the records belonging to the high court of Chancery, all of which are under the immediate care and inspection of the master of the Rolls. First, In the chapel of the Rolls, the oldest record is a patent roll of Edward V. those that bear any higher date being long since deposited in the Tower. Those of the following reigns to the end of queen Elizabeth, and somewhat lower, are still kept here in good order. Secondly, *The petty Bag-office* first receives the enrolments of patents with the privy seals and estreats from the six clerks, but is obliged to transmit the former to the chapel, and the latter to the Exchequer; so that nothing ancient is to be looked for here. Thirdly, In *the Examiner's-office* are depositions of witnesses, from the beginning of the reign of

Edward VI. and some few that are higher. Fourthly, the most noble repository of the ancient records in Chancery is in the *Tower*, under the ultimate inspection of the master of the Rolls. The principal treasure under his charge lies in several presses within that part of the palace which bears the name of *Wakefield Tower*. The contents of these are very large. A general account of them in alphabetical order may be seen in Nicholson.

Another considerable treasure of records within the precincts of the Tower of London, and under the same inspection with the former, is in that part which is called *Cæsar's Chapel*. There is a large collection of proceedings in Chancery as high as the times of Henry IV. together with regular bills, answers and depositions, from the first year of queen Elizabeth, privy seals, manucaptions, &c. from the days of Edward I. and several other particulars.

There is one famous monument of antiquity belonging to this court which they call *Registrum de Cancellaria*, or the register of writs, containing the form of writs at the common law. These have often been printed.

In the hands of the two chamberlains of  
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the lower Exchequer there are many ancient records, leagues, and treaties with foreign princes, standards of money, weights, and measures, &c. There were anciently four several apartments wherein the records of the Exchequer were kept, being all in the custody and under the charge of the chamberlains of that court. A particular account of these with their contents may be seen in Nicholson.

Of the other repositories of exchequer records the principal is the *Pipe-office*, wherein are kept the *great rolls of the Exchequer*, that is one bundle for every year, from the reign of king Henry II. to the present time. In these are stated the accounts of the royal revenue, whether certain or casual. The most ancient record in this office is that which bears the name of king Stephen.

There are also other offices belonging to this high court not to be overlooked by an historian, which are known by the name of their several *remembrancers*, as first, that of the *Queen's Remembrancer*; secondly, of the *Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer*; thirdly, the *Office of Pleas*; and fourthly, the *Office of Remembrancer of first Fruits and Tenths*. To these are to be added the *Courts of Wards*,

the records of which now make part of the treasury of the Queen's-bench. There is also an apartment in the Exchequer bears the name of the *Augmentation-office*. For the contents of these I refer to Nicholson.

Among all the ancient records in the Exchequer, *Doomsday book* is deservedly of the greatest reputation and value. It is a tax book made by the commissioners of William the Conqueror, wherein is an exact survey of all the cities, towns, and villages in England. It does not only account for the several baronies, knights fees, and plough lands, but gives also the number of families, men, soldiers, husbandmen, servants, and cattle; what rent, how much meadow, pasture, woods, tillage, common heath, marsh, &c. every one possessed. It is in two volumes, whereof the former gives a succinct description of thirty-three counties, and the latter a somewhat larger account of Essex, Norfolk, and Suffolk. In the front of each county stands a list of the lords of the soil; that is, the king and a few of his nobles. Sir Henry Spelman has given us a sample of the book, but it is said that the society of antiquaries are about undertaking the publication of the whole.

There



There is also in the keeping of the king's remembrancer a miscellany of ancient treaties, which go by the name of the *red book of the Exchequer*. It has some things (as the number of hides of land in many of our counties) relating to the times before the conquest, and the ceremonies used at the coronation of queen Eleanor wife to king Henry III. There is likewise an exact collection of the escuages under Henry II. Richard I. and king John.

The *black book* is supposed to have been compiled by Gervase of Tilbury, nephew to king Henry II. In this we have the history of the first institution of the court of the king's Exchequer; the manner of stating the accounts of those times, and the way of collecting the rents, both in money and purveyances of victuals, &c.

The great roll which bears the name of *Testa Nevilli* was compiled in the reign of Henry III. and contains an account of all the lands held in grand or petty serjeantry within the county of Hereford.

The English historian will also find his account in consulting occasionally the records of assize, sessions of the peace, and other inferior courts in England, and in Wales. He  
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ought also to look into the navy office, and the abstracts of accounts, lists of the old and new shipping, from the several yards at Deptford, Woolwich, Chatham, &c. all which may be seen in the custody of the secretary of the admiralty.

For a just estimate of the military force in England, there are several repositories of papers and rolls, with which an historian should be acquainted. But above all the *office of ordnance* will afford him the best acquaintance with the provisions of war. All orders and instructions for the government of this office, as likewise all patents, and grants to the many officers, artificers, attendants, and labourers, with the quarter books for salaries, ledgers, receipts, and returns of his majesty's stores, &c. are in the custody of the clerk of the ordnance; as those for the giving out of any provisions, or stores, either at the Tower or any other of the king's magazines, are under the care of the clerk of the delivery.

To understand the history of our trade and commerce, it will be necessary to consult the accounts of exports and imports of all our sea ports; with the amount of the duties paid for them, which will be found with the officers  
who

who have the inspection of the excise and customs, and also in the journals of the House of Commons.

The libraries and museums of many noblemen and private gentlemen are able to afford a good supply of materials to an historian who can procure intelligence of them, and have access to them. And since the opening of the *British Museum* many persons are daily contributing to that immense and valuable collection, by sending ancient writings and manuscripts; which are much more useful when they are thus made the property of the public, than they could be while they were in their own private custody.

A great number of conveyances, deeds, and other papers and records, in the hands of private subjects, were destroyed in the civil wars; but the subversion of monasteries destroyed the greatest number of those useful materials for history; since many of the most considerable English families had committed their most valuable writings to the custody of the monks, in whose hands they thought them safer than at home. The small scraps of parchment and of paper, on which they were commonly written, were more liable  
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to be lost than the more bulky instruments of our days.

Many collections of these private records have been published. Particularly we have a very valuable and judicious collection of contracts, grants, and other evidences, gathered chiefly out of the augmentation office by Mr. Maddox, who has placed them in a methodical order, and ascertained the age of every single instrument, from the Norman conquest to the end of the reign of Henry VIII. under the title of *Formulare Anglicanum*. The general heads of this work are certificates, confirmations, compositions, feoffments, letters of attorney, releases, wills, &c. the greatest part of which are certainly genuine; and notice is given when there seems to be reason for suspecting any of them.

Had pedigrees been carefully preserved in all the great families in England, they would have been of excellent service to an historian; since the most remarkable circumstances in the lives of eminent persons are usually recorded in them. But few of these pedigrees are to be met with.

Old accounts of expences and disbursements in the families of noblemen and persons of quality

quality, will be of singular use to an historian, who cannot but be sensible of what importance it is to take notice of the prices of food, clothes, and other conveniences of life, the wages of servants, and day-labourers, &c.

It is needless to observe what advantage may accrue to history from the *epistolary correspondence*, and private journals, of eminent statesmen, as also from the lives of such persons, in which the most important part of the history of their times is necessarily introduced.

The use of the *ledger-books*, and other monastic records, is very apparent. The most eminent of our historians are greatly indebted to them. Hence they are enabled to clear the descents and pedigrees of many noble families, the tenures of estates, the ancient customs of counties, cities, and great towns, the foundations and endowments of churches, &c. For how sparing or defective soever the monks might be in recording the public affairs of state, we are sure they were extremely diligent in noting those of their own monasteries; whence it is, that the histories of those cathedrals which were anciently in their possession are the most entire of any in the kingdom.

The greatest treasure of this kind of ecclesiastical

fiastical records is contained in the famous *Monasticon Anglicanum*, published in three volumes folio by sir William Dugdale, and Mr. Dodsworth. Great are the advantages which all branches of our history, both ecclesiastical and civil, will derive from this work; and there is hardly a private family of any consideration in the kingdom but will here meet with something of its genealogy and pedigree. They are most scrupulously exact in transcribing the ancient records; so that the bad Latin, barbarous expressions, and other deformities of the monkish style, are to be reckoned beauties in them.

Tanner's *Notitia Monastica* is a valuable addition to the *Monasticon*. It not only contains a short history of the foundation and chief revolutions of all our religious houses, but presents us with a catalogue of such writers (noting the places where we may find them) as will abundantly furnish us with such farther particulars as we may have occasion for.

Our two universities furnish several records worthy to be consulted by our historians. There are no less than twenty-one volumes [relating to the antiquities of the university  
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of Oxford, as charters, orders, statutes, decrees, letters, &c. all in manuscript. Of those which have been printed, the *Historiola Oxoniensis* is reckoned the most authentic. It is only a short fragment of a single page in octavo, wherein we are told that the Britons began an university at Grekelade, which the Saxons removed to Oxford. Anthony Wood has published a valuable work under the title of *The History and antiquities of the University of Oxford*.

The *black book* of Cambridge makes as considerable a figure there as any of the old statute books can do at Oxford, and it has also its *historiola*, which is equal both for matter and authority to the other. The whole volume is a collection of ancient charters and privileges.

The lives of English writers have been written by John Boston, John Leland, J. Pitts, A. Wood, and John Tanner, all proper to be consulted by an English historian. For the character of these works, I refer to Nicholson.

The registers of ecclesiastical courts can be but of little use to a writer of civil history, especially since the reformation. It may not,

however, be improper to observe that registers in churches, of marriages, christenings, and burials, were first appointed to be kept in the year 1538, just upon the dissolution of the monasteries. These have been of some use, and might be of more if care were taken to register other remarkable occurrences relating to the public concerns of the several parishes.

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## LECTURE XXXII.

*Historians of other Nations. Where Accounts of them are to be looked for. What sufficient for an Englishman. Henault's History of France. Use of the Universal History. Thuanus, Guicciardini, Davila, Voltaire. Lives. Voyages and Travels. Suites of Histories.*

HAVING treated so largely of the history of our own nation, I shall refer you to such writers as Wheare and Rawlinson for the historians of other particular countries. Indeed, considering the time it will necessarily require to get tolerably well acquainted with the

the history of our own country (which it is certainly of the most importance for us to be acquainted with) it will be quite sufficient for any person, let him have ever so much leisure for historical pursuits, to take the histories of other countries from compilers of the best repute; and even, of these, the most voluminous may very well be dispensed with. Englishmen, in general, for instance, hardly need to desire a better acquaintance with the history of France than the abridgment of Hénault will supply them with. It were greatly to be wished that the histories of other nations were drawn up in the same compendious manner, and with the same judgment. We should then have, as we may call it, the marrow of history disencumbered of that load of superfluous matter, which makes the reading of history, as it is generally written, extremely tiresome and disgusting. But if a person be possessed of the Universal History, he will generally have it in his power to inform himself of as much of the history of any foreign country or people, as he can have occasion for, or desire.

There are some particular histories, however, which are so excellently written, and

the subjects of which are so generally interesting, that though little notice be taken of the affairs of our own country in them, no person of a liberal education ought to be unacquainted with them. The principal of these are, *Thuanus's* history of his own times, a work almost equal to any production of the classical ages. *Guicciardini's* history of Italy, *Davila's* of the civil wars in France, *Bentivoglio's* of those of the Netherlands, and *Giannone's* history of Naples. The first of these was written originally in Latin, and the four last in Italian.

No writer whatever can excel Vertot in the happy art of making history entertaining; but it is generally thought that he has sacrificed more than he ought to the graces.

Voltaire's general history consists of little more than observations on a course of history. In general they are certainly just, and, to a person who is previously acquainted with the histories to which his observations are adapted, nothing can be more entertaining; and to this his lively manner of writing not a little contributes.

But though the title of his work promises a compendious view of universal history, and  
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therefore might seem to be intended for persons who are beginning the study of history, it would be wholly unintelligible without a previous acquaintance with the subject; not to say that it requires a good stock of general knowledge to guard the mind against his prejudices, and the errors into which his writings in general would in many respects betray his readers.

Time is continually producing other historical productions of great excellence, with which, as they gain the attention of gentlemen and scholars, it will become all readers of history to make themselves acquainted. The recommendation of these must be left to the lecturer of the day.

Besides more general histories, many *single lives* are so well written, and are so peculiarly interesting and instructive, that they force an almost universal attention; as that of Sixtus V. by Leti, that of Gustavus Adolphus by Hart, and many others. *Voyages and Travels* are also works of an historical nature that are universally pleasing, and of those every year never fails to produce several that give the most valuable information, and convey it in the most pleasing manner. The

most generally interesting are the voyages of the circumnavigators, as that of lord Anson, and especially the late ones conducted by captain Cook.

It is a particular satisfaction, after reading a distinct and interesting history of any particular period, to find another historian whose account shall begin about the same time that the preceding leaves off. I shall mention two courses of this kind which I have perused with much satisfaction.

Philip De Comines, a serious and excellent historian, has left such an account of Charles the Bold, duke of Burgundy, and of Lewis XI. of France, together with many particulars of Edward IV. of England, as is in the highest degree interesting and improving. Had I the education of a prince, he should get many parts of this history almost by heart. It ends with the famous expedition of Charles VIII. into Italy, and with this expedition the history of Guicciardini, another very exact and copious historian, begins; and where he ends, viz. a little after the year 1530, the still more celebrated, and more general history of *Thuanus* commences, ending near the death of Henry IV. of France; including the  
civil



civil wars of that country, every thing that is interesting on the theatre of Europe, and even in the more distant parts of the world, for the space of about half a century, comprising events of the greatest magnitude and importance.

If a person cannot read Latin, or French (in which there is a good translation of Thuanus) he may, after Guicciardini, take up the history of Charles V. by Robertson, and with much satisfaction read that work, and after it the histories of Philip II. and III. by Dr. Watson.

A method of making history particularly interesting and useful, is to make the object of it some particular person of distinguished eminence, whose history has a connexion with almost every thing of importance in the age in which he lived; and in writing his history to omit no transaction of any moment. Such a work is the *Memoirs of Petrarch* in three volumes quarto, which I have read several times with singular satisfaction. This work gives a distinct view of the most important affairs of Europe for the space of near seventy years, ending A. D. 1374, and including almost the whole period of the re-

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fidence of the popes at Avignon. As very little is said in this work of the civil transactions of France or England during the reign of Edward III. the defect may be supplied from Froissart, whose manner of writing is very natural and pleasing, resembling that of Philip de Comines; and in a series it may with great propriety be read immediately before that work, though there is an interval of near half a century between them, which must be supplied from other histories.

Immediately after the time of Petrarch was the *grand schism*, the history of which is largely written by *L'Enfant*, in his *History of the Councils of Pisa, and Constance*; which to persons who do not dislike church history will be very interesting; and after this he may read, in the same author, the history of the *Council of Basil*, which will bring him to about the time of Philip de Comines.

If a person finds himself interested in these histories of *councils* (which indeed comprise almost every transaction of importance, civil as well as ecclesiastical, in the period of which they treat) he will have equal satisfaction

tisfaction and advantage in reading Father *Paul's History of the Council of Trent*, a work of extraordinary merit in its kind, especially in the French translation, with notes by Courrayeur.

It would be highly interesting to find a series of the lives of great men which might, in succession, and without interruption, carry us down the stream of time till we come to the period of our own recollection. As Mr. Berington has begun in so early a period as the *life of Abelard*, and has written it in a manner that makes it highly interesting, I cannot help wishing that we had other works of a similar construction, to bring us from thence to the age of Petrarch.

Voyages have less connexion with each other than histories of transactions by land, but those of great consequence have often some relation to each other, and therefore are read with particular satisfaction, in succession, as in the collection of Harris, and others. The voyages of captain Cook, which will always make a most interesting period in the history of navigation, will close this list with great advantage. There are few  
voyages

voyages the objects of which were so great, and none that were so ably and successfully conducted; and they have every advantage of illustration by means of maps and cuts.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.













